GREEK LITERATURE

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A SHORT HISTORY

OF

GREEK LITERATURE

FROM HOMER TO JULIAN

BY

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GREEK LITERATURE.

W. P. 7

PREFACE

THE writer of a survey of Greek literature so brief as this feels throughout the task the lack of elbow-room, and must always be acutely conscious of omissions. I have kept constantly in mind the reader who, though little or not at all acquainted with the classics, realizes that he cannot appreciate any other literature, least of all his own, unless he can relate its masterpieces to the types set, once for all, by the Greeks. He may safely ignore all but the best. But this book is intended, no less, for the student of Greek who, in his second or third year at college, will profit immensely by a rapid survey of the whole field of Greek literature. For him every part of that whole becomes significant, and for his sake the tribe of Euphorion or the declaimers must often usurp space that, if one followed the mere sense of proportion, is due to the creative writers.

Of the prose writers, Julian's is the latest name formally treated, but, in order to include Musaeus and the later epic, I have carried down the sketch of Graeco-Roman poetry to the sixth century.

In the matter of the spelling of names I have not striven for a consistency that scholars continue to abhor. *What advantage is it to a man who writes the name of*

Dio to write it as he ought? asked Epictetus. I might put the same question about Bion, or Eucleides the archon and Euclid the geometer, and others, who will, no doubt, long continue to defy the worshipers of uniformity.

I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to Professor Herbert Weir Smyth, the Editor of this Series, for many valuable suggestions and criticisms.

WILMER CAVE WRIGHT.

BRYN MAWR, February, 1907.

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CHAPTER I

PIERIAN RELIGIOUS POETRY

It was from Thrace that the Muses, the Pierides, daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus, made their first entrance into Greece; from the somber northern country that for the Greek and Latin poets is peculiarly associated with snow and cold, the ice-bound summits of Haemus, the swift, cold waters of the Hebrus, the frozen caverns of the Strymon. In the long night that ends for us with the sudden illumination of the Homeric Poems, the Greeks distinguished a group of legendary figures, poets before Homer as there were brave men before Agamemnon. Homer himself, who names no other poet, describes the encounter of the Muses with Thracian Thamyris. *There they met Thracian Thamyris as he came up from Oechalia and made him cease from song. For he boasted that he would excel, even though the Muses themselves should sing, the daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus. In their anger they made him blind, they took from him his marvelous gift of song, and caused him to forget his harping.*[1] The fate of "blind Thamyris" is echoed in Greek literature as late as the Emperor Julian. He is the prototype of the blind bard, singular in that his loss of sight obscured his poetic gift, while for the rest, blindness is a part of the poet's equipment, as for Demodocus in the *Odyssey*, to whom the Muse gave good and bad together. 'The sight of his eyes she took away, but gave him the gift of sweet song.'[2]

Thamyris

[1] *Iliad* II 594. The story is told with great detail in a song towards the end of Browning's *Aristophanes' Apology*.

[2] So in the earliest version of the Daphnis legend the hero of pastoral poetry sings only after the loss of his sight.

Linus

Linus is a mere name, a personality invented, according to Movers, by Greeks who misinterpreted the Semitic lament *ai lenu*, 'woe to us,' the cry of "women weeping for Tammuz," the Greek Adonis. But where men sang at all the fair Linus song was sung. In Homer's Shield of Achilles it is marked out as the typical lyric.[1] The fragment of a Linus song quoted by the Scholiast on that passage shows us at least what was the Greek notion of the earliest type of dirge. In the fate of Linus we recognize again the primitive conception of a divine jealousy of mortal achievement which blinded Thamyris, Teiresias, and Stesichorus, and destroyed Marsyas. The resentment of Apollo slew Linus, whose suffering survives in Greek tragedy where his personality fades into a mere refrain or epithet of woe.[2]

Musaeus

The fame of Musaeus as a poet and the reputed founder of the Eleusinian Mysteries was handed down by an unbroken tradition. Plato deplores the influence on the superstitious of the 'swarm of books by Orpheus and Musaeus,' while, for the more conservative Aristophanes, Musaeus, like Orpheus, is a great religious teacher of the mysteries and oracles, a 'useful' poet, to be ranked with Homer and Hesiod.[3] Vergil, in his picture of the underworld,[4] honors Musaeus even more than Orpheus, the 'Thracian priest.'

Orpheus

Of all this shadowy tribe the most mysterious and yet most significant is the figure of Orpheus, whom Pindar calls 'the father of song sent by Apollo.' The poems attributed to him became the sacred book of all Greek writers who were seriously interested in the technicalities and mysteries of the religion of Greece. If, as Cicero declares, Aristotle denied the existence of Orpheus, the fact counted for noth-

[1] *Iliad* XVIII 570.

[2] Aesch. *Ag.* 121; Eur. *Hel.* 171.

[3] *Frogs* 1032. Heracleitus (*circa* 500 B.C.) is the oldest witness for Orphic writings. The Greeks ascribed to Onomacritus, the sixth-century forger, certain oracles of Orpheus and Musaeus.

[4] *Aen.* VI 667–668.

ing. For Pythagoreans and Neo-Platonists alike, his *Theogonies* were a sort of Book of Genesis. The collection of *Orphica* that has reached us is a medley of late imitations and fragments which range in date from the fifth or sixth century B.C. to the fourth Christian century. For the most part their interest is antiquarian, but here and there among the older fragments there is a trace of austere and hieratic verse. *Zeus of the gleaming thunderbolt is first, Zeus is last; Zeus is the head, Zeus the center; from Zeus all things were made, Zeus is the foundation of earth and of the starry heavens.*[1] This litany, which may well be primitive, or an echo of the primitive, was the utterance of some mighty-mouthed inventor; it has the harmony of Milton's invocation: —

> "Thee, Father first they sing, Omnipotent,
> Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
> Eternal King; Thee, author of all Being."

Such was at least the Greek conception of this early religious poetry, hexameters in which were defined the attributes and lineage of the gods which were to be made popular by the poems of Hesiod and Homer; stately invocations, verse after verse of epithets that are a sort of prayer; it is precisely the type of song that Orpheus sang to enchant the Argonauts.[2] Its charm escapes our modern taste. But there was a time when men were more interested in the gods than in themselves, and that was the day of Theogonies. For us, all the interest of *Paradise Lost* centers in the fall of Eve; for the primitive Greek it would have centered in the fall of Satan.

The sorrows and resurrection of the Thracian Dionysus — Zagreus — especially appealed to the Orphics. Their tradition and ritual gradually spiritualized the gloomy Thracian legend which is the ground note of all the suffering of Greek tragedy. Euripides, who devoted his mystery play of the *Bacchae* to the sinister side of Dionysus worship, was deeply interested in the Orphic doctrines. When Theseus in the *Hippolytus* taunts his son with his

[1] Abel, *Orphica* 46.

[2] Apoll. Rhod. *Argonautica* 1. 496 ff.

devotion to 'the ancient, ghostly, scrolls of Orpheus,' it is to the Orphic discipline of life that Euripides refers, the asceticism which, for two centuries, had been the main tenet of the Orphic doctrine. The individualistic tendency that it encouraged was no doubt attractive to Euripides, as it was wholly repellent to Plato. The wish of Admetus (*Alcestis* 357), *Would that the voice and the music of Orpheus were mine that I might charm the daughter of Demeter and her lord with my songs and bring thee forth from Hades!* Vergil's *miserabilis Orpheus*, the quest of Eurydice, the descent into Hades, the violent death amid the rites of Dionysus, all the literary immortality of Orpheus, is an echo of the sacred doctrines of Orphism.

Orpheus and the Dionysus legend may represent some form of nature-worship on the "high Thracian farms" of northern Greece. The rivalry of Thamyris and the Muses may symbolize some stage in the growth of secular poetry from the poetry of invocation and genealogy. All that we can assume is that the religious epos of Pieria, of which the Greeks saw a dim reflection in the *Orphica*, was the natural consolation of the more primitive ages of Greece when the Muses first secured for men "a forgetfulness of evils, and a truce from cares."

From this epos the Homeric Olympus may have been derived, but it is in Hesiod and not in Homer that we hear its dying echoes.

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CHAPTER II

THE HOMERIC POEMS

THE *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are the earliest literary monuments, not of Greece alone, but of Europe, and it is to them that we must look for a clew to the poetry of which they are a selection. We can trace in the texture of both poems a number of broken threads of poetic legend, a number of unmistakable allusions to poetry of the same general type, saga poetry, from the great store of which these poems were drawn. The heroic saga was the nucleus that in due time received artistic treatment and was transformed into the heroic epic.[1] There must have been poets, impersonal and forgotten, to sing the Meleager saga of which there is an incomplete but splendid echo in the 'Embassy' of the *Iliad*. The exploits of Tydeus and his peers, the tale of Thebes, the Dorian saga of Heracles, the Thessalian legend of the adventures of the crew of the Argo 'old in story,' the tragic tale of Bellerophon, all these are quoted in the poems,[2] themselves limited by the Trojan campaign and its sequel. The poet of the *Odyssey*, who bids the Muse inspire him to sing some portion of the Odysseus saga, has his counterpart in Phemius, who sings among the suitors the 'Sorrowful Return of the Achaeans,' or in Demodocus at the Phaeacian court, making

The heroic saga

[1] The view of Niese that there was no pre-Homeric saga is worthy of note only because his book, *Die Entwicklelung der Homerischen Poesie*, contains much that is valuable for other aspects of the Homeric question.

[2] *E.g. Iliad* IX 527–599; IV 372–400; VI 152–211. Achilles in his hut sings the exploits of the heroes of old.

his lay of an episode in the war of which men still talked as well as sang. It is significant that his 'Quarrel of Odysseus and Achilles' and his 'Tale of the Wooden Horse' are not to be found in our *Iliad.*

It is in fact evidence of the later date of the *Odyssey* that the minstrels in that poem take their subjects, with the exception of the song of Ares and Aphrodite, from the Trojan cycle already fixed in public favor by the *Iliad;* even the sirens sang of *the toils they wrought, Argives and Trojans, by the will of the gods in broad Troy-land.* Of all their legends the Trojan saga made the most profound impression on the Greeks. Many an "unripe myth," many an "unripe epic," must have foreshadowed the *Iliad.* The hexameter that Homer wields with ease was an instrument forged by a long succession of poets, very different from the cruder meter of primitive hieratic verse. But the poet of the 'Wrath' chose with poetic insight the most deeply and permanently dramatic theme in all the store of saga. He laid his scene in Asia Minor and showed in the resistance of Priam and the people of Priam the Eastern defiance of the West, a breach never to be healed. The echo of that collision had not died when the Greeks repelled at Marathon the return wave of invasion from the East.

The Trojan saga

The excavation at Hissarlik of a city — the sixth from the bottom — that can be called 'Mycenaean' secures, almost to the extent that Schliemann hoped, a historical background for the Homeric Poems. If Dörpfeld's date (1500–1000 B.C.) for this Homeric city, the Pergamus of Troy,[1] be accepted, we may place that date as the *terminus a quo* of the Trojan saga. The Homeric Poems are then a precipitate of certain historical events. They may even represent some stage in the colonization of Asia Minor from the mainland, a literature of the exodus of the Achaeans, driven out by the Dorian invasion. At any rate the events in the Poems occurred before the Dorian

Date of the Iliad

[1] The number of combatants must be greatly exaggerated in the poem, since the circuit of the 'Homeric' city is little more than a third of a mile.

settlement of the Peloponnesus. For the *Iliad* knows no Dorians, and the *Odyssey* only the Dorians of Crete.[1]

The problem of the origin and authorship of the Homeric Poems kindled a debate in which the learned world is still embroiled. The open questions of Greek archaeology, history, and linguistic all wait for a correct reading of the Homeric enigma. Archaeologists hope to determine it by the spade; philologists by studies in dialect; historians, like Bethe,[2] by tracking the local relations and cults of the heroes, which may reveal the separate threads of the heroic saga, now so closely interwoven; literary critics persist in applying the canons of aesthetics, the most subjective and fluctuating of all tests. The consequence is that no one can relate his individual impressions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* independently of the thronging theories which give a fresh bias to every generation of readers. The same may be said, if with less force, of all Greek poetry down to Archilochus. After that the judgment is freer. There is no Alcaean, no Sophoclean, 'question.' One can form one's estimate of either, as one may of Byron or Tennyson, from the remains. But a literary revaluation of the *Homerica* apart from the Homeric question is impossible.

The Homeric question

The honor of giving birth to Homer was claimed by seven cities, chiefly Ionian, though Aeolic Smyrna[3] is among the most respected claimants. Melesigenes, one of the names given to the poet by tradition, is derived from the river Meles which flows near Smyrna. The eight *Lives* of Homer, which relate his adventures with much variation of detail, and a precision that is the mint-mark of fiction when applied to remote events, merely add to the uncertainty of the tradition. The very name of 'Homer' and its meaning is one of the minor problems of Homeric criticism. Like 'Stesichorus,'

Homer's birthplace and name

[1] *Od.* 19. 177. The silence of Homer usually recoils on one who would argue from it. The Aeolians are never named, yet on no theory could they have been unknown to Homer.

[2] *Neue Jahrbücher*, 1904.

[3] Smyrna was Aeolic as late as 688 B.C.

it may be an appellative implying some poetic activity — the 'Harmonizer' (ὁμῆ, ἁρ);[1] but more probably it has no more relation to the composition of the *Iliad* than has the name of Shakespeare to his plays. The regular meaning 'hostage' gives no clew; we cannot trust the legend that in any dialect it meant 'blind'; and Sengebusch's identification of Homer and Thamyris reminds one of another ingenious German who refused to distinguish the Ettrick Shepherd from the Wizard of the North since "Hogg" was obviously the dialect form of "Scott." The famous reference to the *blind man of Chios* in the *Delian Hymn to Apollo* may just as well have referred to Cynaethus of Chios, to whom the *Hymn* is assigned by a Pindaric scholiast.[2] From the same commentator we first hear of the Homeridae, a sort of school, or *gens*, of rhapsodes about whom the tradition is no less confused. Were they 'Sons of Homer' or 'Sons of Hostages'? Is Homer a patronymic derived from them, or did some family choose him as their eponymous hero? For Plato the Homeridae are merely those interested in Homer. Even so, three thousand years hence, the true rôle of the Wordsworthians will be debated.

The Homeridae

Our ignorance of the "little clan" of Chios and of the whole corps of rhapsodes is the measure of our ignorance of the growth of the Homeric Poems. Did the Thessalian Achaeans,[3] the earlier conquerors of the Peloponnesus, evicted in their turn by the Dorians, carry across the Aegaean the hero saga that celebrates the Mycenaean dynasty, the nucleus of the *Iliad?*[4] Strabo tells of a second assembling at Aulis under Orestes and his son, who led a migration through the Troad to Lesbos, and of a settlement of

[1] Fick thinks the name may indicate a cult to celebrate the Aeolo-Achaean union.

[2] Schol. Pind. *Nem.* II 1.

[3] Mr. Ridgeway's theory is that they were a Celtic tribe which had migrated from Epirus to Thessaly and formed a ruling Achaean caste. But his picture of an army of conquered "Pelasgians" officered by Achaeans in the Trojan campaign is unsupported by any evidence in the *Iliad* of such a relation between the Greek chiefs and their men.

[4] The view of Monro, Leaf, and Lang.

the Pelopids at Cymé in the twelfth and eleventh centuries B.C. Perhaps the colonists of whom this legend is the reflection took with them the lays in which the exploits of Agamemnon were already famous. If so, we may imagine, with Mr. Leaf, that "some part of the most primitive *Iliad* may have been actually sung by the court minstrel in the palace whose ruins can still be seen in Mycenae," a minstrel who may have seen the day when Mycenae fell, like Troy.

Birthplace of the Poems

Again, was the *Iliad* the work of Aeolic and Ionian poets in Asia Minor, who sang in the Greek colonies the exploits of the Achaeans of precolonial days?[1] The *Iliad* might then have its origin in the family pride of the princely colonial houses that claimed descent from Agamemnon. Against this theory is the fact that the last thing that Homer would seem to envisage is a Hellenized Asia Minor, a foreign settlement of Greeks. For him Miletus, the flower of Greek colonial enterprise, is still Carian. Agamemnon comes to conquer, not to colonize. To return to Greece, to their 'dear native land,' that, with the Greek heroes, is an *idée fixe;* a strange point of view to emphasize in a colonial epic. Would the poet of such an epic ignore the Aeolians and only once mention the Ionians?[2] In that debatable Book, the eleventh of the *Odyssey*, the catalogue of fair women is made up from the legends of Thessaly, Boeotia, the Peloponnesus, and Crete. No Asiatic heroine displays her beauty and anguish to Odysseus. In his vision only the miscreant Tantalus is Asiatic; and even he is the father of Pelops, the first of the mighty line under whose leadership the Achaeans took over the Peloponnesus. The great wave of Aeolic colonists had been preceded by lesser and less effective inundations. It is, no doubt, one of these Aeolic aspirations towards Asia Minor that is the basis of the Trojan saga.

An appeal to his language would seem the most natural way to determine a poet's origin. The language of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*

[1] The view of Fick, Grote, Niese, Croiset.

[2] The passage is late (*Il.* XIII 685).

is a mixture of dialects in which Ionic and Aeolic predominate. Few scholars would now maintain, with Christ, that an Ionian poet of that age might deliberately embroider his verse with Aeolic, or that such a dialect as the 'Epic' was ever heard on the lips of man. It is now widely held that some form of Aeolic was the original basis which the Ionian colouring overlaid and to a great extent replaced. The Homeric dialect is a palimpsest. It is certainly easier to believe that the poems were transliterated, much as Dryden, Pope, and Wordsworth rewrote Chaucer, than to imagine that a dialect with the artificial complexion of Homer's could have weathered all the centuries down to Aristarchus.

Dialect

The first definite attempt to recover the original underlying Aeolic was made by Fick, who published Aeolic versions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. His main thesis is that the older portions of the poems arose in Aeolis on the coast of Asia Minor, about 730 B.C., and were transliterated into Ionic two centuries later when, in the hands of the blind Cynaethus of Chios, they were transformed into the Ionian Epos.[1] Where the Ionic dialect provided no metrical equivalent the Aeolic form was left, registered by the meter. The argument rests partly on the behavior in the poems of the "Aeolic" digamma. In the extant Ionic remains, which go back as early as 700 B.C., there is no sure trace of this letter, which corresponds to our *w* and the Latin *v*. Before that date Ionic, like Attic, seems to have discarded the digamma, initial and medial.[2] In the Homeric Poems the places where it is assumed by the meter are in a proportion of about five to one where the meter refuses it. According to Fick the passages conditioned by the digamma are Aeolic, the others Ionic and later accretions. His contention of an epos originally Aeolic

Fick

[1] Fick accepts the scholiast's view that the "blind man of Chios" who wrote the *Hymn to the Delian Apollo* was Cynaethus. "Blind Thamyris" in *Il.* II and blind Demodocus were his sympathetic creations.

[2] Cp. the neglect of *w* in the pronunciation of *Harwich* and *Warwick;* and *'ooman* for *woman* in dialect English.

is accepted by many modern scholars.[1] But any such attempt as his Aeolic recension is unconvincing because of our ignorance of eighth-century Aeolic.

More recent is the Aeolic 'Original *Iliad*' of Bechtel (1901),[2] interveined like the 'Menis' of Fick by the 'Wrath', but very different in substance, in dialect, and general conception. Fick supported his selection of the original Aeolic passages, in the case of the *Iliad*, by the aesthetic and logical arguments of Grote, Düntzer, and others; while, for the *Odyssey*, his selection of Ionic accretions showed remarkable coincidences with the passages rejected from the 'Ur-Odyssee,' the 'original *Odyssey*' of Kirchhoff, whose recension was, like Grote's, mainly aesthetic and logical. Bechtel, on the other hand, relies on Robert's antiquarian recension to support his Aeolic 'Ur-Ilias.' **Bechtel**

Robert developed the main thesis of Reichel (1894) that the only defensive armor of the Homeric heroes was the long shield, illustrated on a Mycenaean fragment of a silver vase and on the famous dagger blades from Mycenae, and a leather helmet. They wore no metal cuirass or metal greaves, for these have not been found at Mycenae. The Ionian growth of the Epic is to be seen in the introduction of the round shield[3] and metal gear of the

[1] Ritschl in 1834 held the same view as Fick, but he believed in a Homer of Smyrna, working on a nucleus derived from the mainland.

[2] A comparison of these two Aeolic 'kernels' is instructive. Fick extracted the story of the 'Wrath' from eleven books of the *Iliad*, ranging from Book I to Book XXII. His 'Menis,' thus constructed, consists of 2260 lines, and ends with the boast of the Greeks over dead Hector at XXII 393. The last Books of the *Iliad* were, he thinks, a Lesbian expansion, while Books II to VII were by a 'highly moral royalist' from Cymé or Myrina, living under the Pelopids. The whole was edited by Cynaethus in the first half of the sixth century. Bechtel selects his 'Original *Iliad*' of 2146 lines from seventeen Books, ending at XXII 212. He too divides the present poem into three redactions: 1, by an editor from Miletus; 2, by a Samian; 3, by a Euboean.

[3] The round shield is illustrated on the Mycenaean 'Warrior Vase,' but this is assigned to the "debased" period of Mycenaean art. The absence of this or that product of Homeric civilization from the Mycenaean remains is used by some critics as incautiously as the much misused "silence of Homer."

Ionian hoplite of the end of the eighth century. Robert and Bechtel carry this theory so far as to construct an Aeolic poem from those passages in which Mycenaean armor occurs. Their recension illustrates the dangers of abandoning that sobriety in detail which Ephorus said ought to mark our dealings with remote events. Take the case of *Iliad* V, the 'Exploits of Diomede,' recognized by many scholars as having no organic connection with the 'Menis' or 'Wrath.' In this old independent lay, Mycenaean weapons prevail, but they are flanked by an unusual number of ingrained Ionisms. In many similar passages Bechtel evades this embarrassment by the simple device of an "archaizing" Ionian, the favorite *deus ex machina* in all such cases.[1] But *Iliad* V, he says, can never have been Aeolic: it was written not much later than the primitive *Iliad*, by an Ionian who used "an artificial dialect in which Aeolic and Ionic elements were commingled"; an amazing *volte-face* for a partisan of the Aeolian epos, whose position rests on the improbability of the original use of such a composite dialect as the 'epic.' *Iliad* V is the very book which Fick assigns to "an Aeolic royalist of Cymé." If Bechtel is right, we may as well set aside both Aeolic recensions as unnecessary. But we have seen that the use of an artificial dialect by an original poet of the *Iliad* is among those possibilities which the judgment refuses.

Yet it is only through some such reconciliation of archaeology and linguistic that we can hope for a solution of the problem. Meanwhile, the Mycenaean remains show certain marked coincidences with the civilization described in the Homeric Poems. The little hill-fort in the recesses of the Argive territory has justified its epithet 'rich in gold,' the gold of commerce, for Mycenae lay on the trade-route from Nauplia to Corinth. Since the recovery of the dagger-blades of Mycenae with their inlaid metals and enamel, there has been a reaction in favor of the theory that the Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* XVIII, so elaborately decorated

[1] In *Iliad* XVI 400–413, the armor is Ionian, the wounding Mycenaean. If this be archaism, it is at least wholly unconscious.

with its vignettes of war and peace, is not wholly imaginary, a shield out of a fairy tale. The siege fragment of a Mycenaean silver vase, published in 1891, might pass for an illustration of one of the panels of the Homeric shield, the city at war. There too the women stand on the wall to gaze, while the men sally forth. The great shield of Ajax 'like a tower,' the shield that beat upon the ankles and neck of Hector as he left the battlefield, is the pattern of those carried by the fighting men in Mycenaean decorative work. The blue glass frieze found at Tiryns has illuminated a famous passage in the *Odyssey*.[1] The Baltic amber from the tombs of Mycenae is a tangible relic of the intercourse of Greek traders with the people of northern Europe of whose midnight sun Odysseus knows and the deadly night that darkens their winter days. But the points of difference are even more striking. In Homer the dead are invariably burned; at Mycenae there is no trace of incineration. Iron implements, known to the poet of the *Iliad*, more familiar in the *Odyssey*, have not been found at Mycenae. Unless the Homeric poets were very imperfect antiquarians, as all goes to show they were, the civilization that they describe was either post-Mycenaean or marks a Mycenaean decadence. It is impossible to draw the line between Homer archaizing and Homer dropping into the manners of his own age — the changing manners of some four centuries. His use of armor, for example, is as mixed as his dialect and is as little to be identified with the results, so far, of excavation. The very epithet 'Mycenaean' seems likely to be superseded or greatly limited. Since the excavations of Mr. A. J. Evans and others, in Crete, the focus of the culture of that golden age has shifted from Mycenae, the *point d'appui* of Homeric archaeologists, to Cnossos. There Daedalus made a dancing floor for Ariadne (*Il.* XVIII 590), which may mean, as Mr. Ridgeway thinks, that Cretan art in the Mycenaean age was developed from the mainland of Greece. That would leave Mycenae still paramount. But the undeciphered documents of Crete

The Mycenaean remains

[1] Odysseus marvels at the blue frieze in the hall of Alcinous; *Od.* 7. 87.

may at any moment reveal a Minoan civilization wholly disconnected from the Homeric, more advanced and richer than the Mycenaean. Oblique though it may prove, or partial, a Cretan revelation could hardly fail to throw light on the Trojan question. But so far the dumb remains of Mycenae, Hissarlik, and Cnossos have rather widened than answered the question raised by the tradition that speaks in the Homeric Poems — what essence of history can be distilled from the Trojan saga?

The Minoan remains

By the profound interest of its subject, but still more — and hence its right to be considered the bloom of the epos — by its unique success as a composition, the *Iliad* was lifted out of the general fermentation of the heroic saga. The forces brought to bear on it which have made it what it now is were chiefly centripetal: they tended to keep it together and to add to it. But there were also disintegrating agencies: the treacherous memories of the rhapsodes, whose activities were prolonged and vaguely defined, the aesthetic or patriotic prejudices of the audiences of all the centuries down to Aristarchus. The 'poetry of Homer' which was suppressed by Cleisthenes of Sicyon (*circa* 590) because it exalted his enemies of Argos,[1] no doubt included the *Iliad*. Besides the general glorification of the Argives, their rival of Sicyon must have found peculiarly offensive the statement in *Il.* II 592, that *Adrastus used to rule over Sicyon*. Other hearers might have grounds for sensitiveness. At any rate, the first record of a definite check on the dispersion or alteration of the Poems is the tradition of the Panathenaic ordinance ascribed to Solon (*floruit* 600 B.C.). He passed a law that they should be recited at the State festival of the Panathenaea 'by prompting', ἐξ ὑποβολῆς, or according to another version, 'in succession,' ἐξ ὑπολήψεως.[2] The exact meaning of these phrases is uncertain, and we know nothing precise about the enactment. But it appears to show that Athens assumed a guardianship of the Poems, and recognized the need

Cleisthenes of Sicyon

Solon's law

[1] Herod. V 67.

[2] Diog. Laert. I 57; *pseudo*-Plat. *Hipparch.* 228.

of a standard text. The Athenian attitude of responsibility for the Hellenic masterpieces is still more sharply defined by the tradition of the 'Recension of Peisistratus.' What is the evi- **The 'Recension of Peisistratus'**
dence for this sixth-century commission of seventy-two court philologians — a suspicious number, and a century to which one does not look for philology? The *vox totius antiquitatis* claimed for it by Wolf is first heard in Cicero;[1] Pausanias, Aelian, and the later commentators take up the tale. A famous passage in Diogenes Laertius (*Solon* 1. 57) quotes Dieuchidas, the Megarian historian, to the effect that Solon did more than Peisistratus to illuminate the Homeric Poems. A lacuna in the text has been filled in by Ritschl with a statement that 'Peisistratus collected the poems and inserted a verse to the profit of the Athenians.' Those who, like Wilamowitz, accept this reading, lay stress on his proof that Dieuchidas lived as early as the fourth century B.C. The interpolated verse (*Il.* II 558) was quoted, according to the tradition, on the Athenian side in an arbitration between Megara and Athens for the award of Salamis. The advocates of the recension of Peisistratus find it hard to account for the fact that neither Aristarchus nor Aristotle says a word about the forgery, though the former rejects the verse and the latter mentions the incident of its quotation (*Rhet.* 1. 15). Perhaps Wilamowitz is right in explaining the charge of Dieuchidas as the invention of a Megarian who could not brook the ascendency of fourth-century Athens in every field; it was another Megarian, Hereas, who accused Peisistratus of interpolating *Od.* 11. 631 (on Theseus the Attic hero) 'to please the Athenians.' We may safely ignore that part of the tradition of the Peisistratean recension which would make the Poems a sort of Septuagint. But between the rhapsodes and the Alexandrian grammarians some recension must have occurred, and all the evidence **Influence of Athens**
points to the sixth century. The Alexandrians read an Atticized Homer; the very legend that Aristarchus thought Homer was an Athenian points to that. When one considers the

[1] *De Oratore* 3. 34.

influence of the Attic recitations of some three centuries, for the greater part of which Athens was the literary center of Greece and monopolized the book trade, the surprising thing is that the poems are not more deeply dyed in Attic coloring. We find no Athenian 'Exploits' to soothe Athenian vanity, only isolated lines.[1] Onomacritus, the court forger of the Peisistratidae, was at any rate credited by the Alexandrian critics with having had special opportunities for fraud. Their rejection of *Od.* 11. 602–603 as by his hand must mean that they had before them other copies than the Attic exemplar — the canonical text.

But the Atticism of the Poems is only tentative; a crystallization had taken place by the sixth century which secured them from anything like transliteration. The responsibility of Peisistratus for the Attic, the individual efforts of Cynaethus of Chios for the Ionian, recension are merely convenient footholds. In the ocean of circulation of the Homeric Poems the strongest current was now Attic; any official effort to make a standard text would naturally be the privilege of Athens.

The diaskeuasts

The Alexandrians accounted for the divergencies of their Homeric texts by the activity of the diaskeuasts. It is they who are responsible for the individual editions of Homer (αἱ κατ' ἄνδρα) which arose in the centuries between Peisistratus and the Alexandrians; Antimachus of Colophon (*circa* 410 B.C.), himself an epic poet, and even Aristotle, are credited with editions of this sort. The fifth-century schoolmaster who, as Plutarch tells us (*Alcib.* 7), had made a private revision of Homer for his own use, was the Fick of his own day and not exceptional. The city editions (αἱ κατὰ πόλεις) were contributed to Alexandria by several towns, such as Sinope, Argos, Crete, and Marseilles. It is the more surprising that when one examines the quotations from Homer, in Plato, or Aeschines

Editions of the Poems

[1] *E.g. Il.* I 265; III 144; XX 219–230. The last passage, in which the Attic hero Erichthonius is foisted into a Trojan genealogy, may date from the time when Athens claimed kinship with the Trojans for political ends. (Strabo, XII p. 604.)

the orator, or Aristotle, one finds that, in spite of all this revision, there are no essential differences from our own text. There are some verbal variations; but of the four hundred and eighty quotations collected from pre-Alexandrian writers there are only twelve that our *Iliad* lacks. Plato quotes Homer most frequently and most correctly; only in a spurious dialogue (*Alcib.* II) does any important variant occur. One would find more misquotation of Shakespeare or Milton in modern writers who cite from memory.

The Petrie papyrus fragment of the *Iliad* (1890), which is a century older than Aristarchus, and the Oxford fragments contain some verses that do not occur in our text. From these papyri we can conjecture the sort of copies that, with their numerous but slight variants, must have confronted the first notable Homeric critic, Zenodotus of Alexandria (*circa* 280 B.C.). His recension was a precedent followed by all the great librarians, by his pupil Aristophanes of Byzantium (200 B.C.), and finally by Aristarchus (160 B.C.). This last is the pattern critic of antiquity, the pride of the Alexandrian school. For our knowledge of his work we depend on a summary that was copied into the margin of *Venetus A*, the famous tenth-century Ms. of the *Iliad*, first given to the world in 1788. At the end of each book of the poem there occurs in the Ms. a sort of formula which described the epitome of learned criticism that is preserved in the margin. Scholiastic work on the *Iliad* continued as late as the twelfth century A.D.; it is chiefly anonymous, though we have extracts from the *Homeric Questions* of Porphyrius, the neo-Platonist (*circa* 260 A.D.). The scholia of the "Quartet," Didymus on the critical signs of Aristarchus, Aristonicus on his recension, Nicanor on punctuation, Herodianus on prosody, are the most valuable. Didymus and Aristonicus lived under Augustus, Nicanor and Herodianus under Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius. Their epitome of Alexandrian work, which lay long ignored in the library of St. Mark, was unearthed by Villoison and published in 1788.

The scholiasts

The publication of the Venetian scholia was a revelation of the

doubts and difficulties of Alexandria. Aristarchus, though a searching critic, was cautious, over-cautious if we judge him from the standpoint of modern scholars. They are of the same mind as Crates and his school of Pergamon, who ridiculed their rivals of Alexandria for their attention to details, their 'trifling with monosyllables.' But the appearance of the views of Aristarchus as reflected in the scholia was the signal for the renewal of the Homeric debate in terms, and from a point of view, that would have scandalized Alexandria and Pergamon alike. In 1795 Wolf published the famous *Prolegomena*, with its theory that the *Iliad* is a conglomeration of fragments which owes to Peisistratus its present form. He supported his argument with the contention that writing was not in literary use when the *Iliad* was composed; there was, therefore, no reading public; but our *Iliad* must have been designed for a reading public. To Wolf, who made his tests without the touchstones of epigraphy and archaeology, the point seemed vital. For modern scholars, who envisage the problem in the light of a century of excavations, his arguments have lost much of their force. It is true that we have no Greek inscriptions that it is safe to date earlier than the first half of the seventh century B.C. The 'baleful signs' that Proetus sends as the death warrant of Bellerophon (*Il.* VI 168) do not imply anything more advanced than some form of syllabary like the Cretan. Not before Archilochus (*fr.* 68) is there any mention of writing in Greek literature. But the Greeks received the alphabet from Eastern, perhaps Phoenician, sources, not later than the tenth century. Homer must have known of writing, but he may not have used it in an age when it was a modern invention that had not superseded the use of memory. More than once he shows signs of conscious antiquarianism that would preserve him from the anachronism of making his heroes write. When we review the analogies of other epics and consider the feats of memory that were common even to the rhapsodes of

The Venetian scholia

Wolf's Prolegomena

Writing in Homer

Plato's day,[1] we must conclude that memories able to hold and transmit the Homeric poems were far more common than manuscripts.

Wolf's theory of a conglomerate *Iliad* like the *Mahâbhârata* has fallen into the background, and his idea of the functions of the Peisistratean commission hardly coincides with the present conception of the Attic recension. His work had been mainly destructive. His famous disciple, Lachmann, following in his steps, dissected the *Iliad* into nineteen separate lays. His 'Kleinliedertheorie,' too, had its day, and has been shelved — *laudatur et alget.*

Lachmann

G. Hermann (1834) is the father of the theory which has supplanted the views of Wolf and Lachmann, the conception of a nucleus or kernel which suffered gradual expansion from a series of redactions. The design was fixed by the original poet when he chose the Wrath of Achilles for his theme; the later redactors respected, to a certain extent, his limits. Their part was to vary and embellish, *varias inducere plumas;* but some dislocation of the original sequence of the story, some rending of the tissues, was inevitable. With as many variations as scholars, this view now prevails.[2]

G. Hermann

The variation naturally begins with each critic's conception of the 'Menis' or 'Wrath.' Christ assigns two thirds of our *Iliad,* Bergk two fifths, Leaf about one sixth, to the original 'Homer.' Not a single lay of Lachmann or Christ would survive the armor test of Robert. The Aeolic 'Menis' of Fick, the 'Original *Iliad*' of Bechtel, are profoundly different. There is, however, a general tendency to derive the essential poem of the 'Wrath' from certain books of the *Iliad,* especially I, XI, XV, XVI. The poetry of these books is used as a touchstone of the rest. "We must," says Mr. Leaf, in his last edition of the *Iliad* (1902), "shut our eyes now and then, to open them again as the ring of the true metal calls our attention to the

The 'kernel' theory

[1] Cp. Xen. *Sympos.* III 81; Plato, *Laws* 810 E.

[2] Christ, Fick, Kirchhoff, Leaf, Wilamowitz, Bechtel, etc.

splendid narrative and characterization which are at the bottom of the expansion of the Menis into the *Iliad*." Even if one should grant that the author of the 'Menis' was mysteriously unable to write below a certain level, this detection of the true metal seems likely to remain a subjective exercise.[1]

Eustathius, in the twelfth Christian century, recorded the suspicions of the 'ancients' as to the genuineness of *Iliad* X. It is, in fact, the most insulated of all the cantos of the *Iliad*, though one cannot imagine that it or they ever had a separate existence. Of all the exploits of the Greeks, this grim episode is the most foolhardy. After a long day of fighting, which had abruptly ceased, came the embassy and its failure in Book IX, action enough, one would have thought, for the night that followed the Greek reverse. Agamemnon, however, will not let his baffled warriors sleep, but must send out Diomede and Odysseus *through the dark night, amid the slain, through the arms and the black blood*, to slay or reconnoiter the Trojans, now, in the flush of their success, bivouacked not far from the ships. On the way they meet and murder Dolon, a spy even more foolhardy than themselves. After slaying Rhesus and twelve of his men in their sleep, they ride back to camp on his famous horses, which, like the whole achievement, are never again mentioned. The episode is the only one in the *Iliad* of which there is a close imitation in an extant play, the *Rhesus*, usually ascribed to Euripides.

This book is a good instance of simple interpolation. It has been rejected on the score of insulation and inconsistency, considered with a certain amount of late diction. Where the interpolation is complex, not of whole books, but of passages and single lines, the door is open to every shade of opinion, every canon of criticism. The critics are almost unanimous in rejecting certain episodes: Helen on the wall in *Iliad* III,

Interpolations

[1] The incident of the weeping of Achilles' horses and their address by Zeus in *Il.* XVII is included in his 'Original *Iliad*' by Bechtel; it is rejected by Fick, and by Leaf, who says that it betrays a "sentimental tone foreign to the oldest Epic."

and the duel of Paris and Menelaus; the parting of Hector and Andromache in VI; the battle of the gods in XX; the beautiful and cruel episode of Lycaon in XXI; the funeral games of Patroclus in XXIII; and all passages containing a reference to the mysterious wall before the ships. But the unanimity ends with the rejection. If one asks why or when or how these passages, most of them entirely worthy of the poet of the 'Menis,' were inserted in the body of the *Iliad* and ascribed to Homer, every critic makes his own separate answer. Those answers are usually based on aesthetic or logical arguments. Retardation of the action, a tone out of harmony with the poetry of the 'Menis,' signs of dislocation of the sequence of events, above all, logical and verbal inconsistencies, — are the grounds of judgment. Their cumulative effect is great. But after reading such an analysis of the *Iliad* as Mr. Leaf's, one's experience is much like Cicero's with the proofs of immortality in the *Phaedo;* he gave his assent while the book was in his hand, but even as he laid it down, he ranged himself with the dissenters. In this case, however, what weakens one's assent is not so much laying down one book as taking up another. There is a strong *a priori* probability that the poem is the result of expansions of a far more simple kernel which is embedded in our version. There are a number of ingenious ways of disengaging the kernel from the expansion, a number of hypotheses which almost arrive at certainty. But it is by dint of their number and complexity that they stand together; if you should isolate any one of them, it could never stand alone and presentable to the lay reader.

Among the many agencies that conditioned the growth of the *Iliad* we must reckon the genuine creative impulse of the true poet; the tendency of the court poet to insert panegyrics, or episodes that should flatter family pride, such as the exploits of Diomede or Idomeneus; above all, the efforts of the redactor to supply transitions that would lend an appearance of unity to a long epic. All these would produce interpolation, simple and complex. But the stimulus to all such expansion was a public

taste that we cannot gauge; the taste of a public to whom retardation of the action and episodes that had no relation to the main plot may have seemed as appropriate as, later, they seemed to Aristotle, who speaks of the *Catalogue of the Ships*, which every modern editor rejects, as an instance of that use of episodes which he plainly admires in Homer. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are essentially court poems, composed for a court audience. Now a court audience is not, in any age, critical. What were discrepancies, or repetitions, or lack of logical sequence, to the guests after a banquet in a great man's house, when the minstrel sang and they listened spellbound, with a ceaseless desire to hear him, as Eumaeus says of such a singer in the *Odyssey*? Or, later, can we imagine a more critical audience for the rhapsode at the public festivals? The eyes of his hearers, too, would never rest on a written copy; and all minor detail escapes notice when the story is engaging the attention. For the German scholar, a duel between Paris and Menelaus in the tenth year of the war is inconceivable; all that a Greek audience demanded was a striking picture of the cowardice of Paris. To Longinus and Gibbon the battle of the gods in *Iliad* XX was a signal example of the grand style. "I almost doubt which is more sublime," said Gibbon, "Homer's 'Battle of the Gods' or Longinus' 'Apostrophe to Terentianus' upon it." For Mr. Leaf, the lines quoted by Longinus (XX 61–65) are a "bombastic introduction." Are we nearer to the taste of the Greeks with Longinus or with Mr. Leaf? If we could answer that question, we should yet have to ask *what* Greeks? For a difference in taste in the grand style may quite possibly have separated Thucydides and Longinus as widely as it separates Gibbon and Mr. Leaf. Nor is such difference of taste at all a matter of difference of time. "Any one could have drawn the same characters for the purpose of piecing them into the *Iliad*," says Carlyle. "The character of the matchless Pelides," says De Quincey, a rather more reliable critic, "has an ideal finish and a divinity about it, which argue that it never could have been a gradual accumulation from successive touches." The "didactic

prosings" of Nestor regularly offend the eye of Mr. Leaf and to his critical sense imply interpolation. They are absolutely in character, charming touches of *êthos*, to Mr. Ridgeway and Mr. Lang. All these critics range over the same ground, but they never put up the same game.

By the eighth century the *Iliad* was complete. But the composition of a great part of the *Odyssey* may be put at least a century later. It is on the score of its comparative youth that the problem of this poem has long been recognized as secondary and almost separate. Even at Alexandria there were separatists (Chorizontes) who asserted the dual authorship of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, a flicker of heresy which was put out by the strong hand of Aristarchus. Time, which makes all heresies orthodox, has suppressed the Unitarians in their turn, and all scholars are now Chorizontes. Even the argument of Aristarchus from anticipations of the *Odyssey* in the *Iliad* proves to be double-edged. The Odyssean language in certain cantos of the *Iliad* (IX, X, XXIII, XXIV) is merely evidence of their later date. This is especially true of X, the *Doloneia*, where the exploit of Odysseus is taken by Monro to mark that advance of the Ithacan[1] hero in popular favor which culminates in the *Odyssey*. The poet of the *Odyssey* never indeed repeats the substance of the *Iliad*, but his verbal echoes are numerous and not always intelligent.[2] For instance, in *Od.* 14. 419, Eumaeus kills the best of his swine for Odysseus, *a fat five-year-old;* the age is well enough for the ox in *Iliad* II 402, of which the line is a close imitation; but five-year-old pork is not a

Later date of the Odyssey

[1] Dörpfeld maintains (in *Leukas*, Athens, 1905) that Leucas, at the time of the composition of the *Odyssey*, was an island, and that this, rather than the island farther south, was the true Ithaca, the home of Odysseus. The Ithacans, driven southward by the invading Dorians, migrated to the new Ithaca, which was henceforth mistakenly identified with the Ithaca of the *Odyssey*. The theory clears up a point in the geography of the *Odyssey*, but the proofs, if there be any proof possible, have not yet appeared from the excavations on Leucas.

[2] Sittl has collected a number of such passages.

dainty. In the minor antiquities, customs, and ideas of civilization the divergences are many and easily detected. The poet of the *Odyssey* had a wider range in the matter of geography, — a notable case is his explicit knowledge of Egypt, — of metals and trees; a narrower interest in beasts of prey which in the more primitive *Iliad* are a constant accompaniment and terror of the pastoral life. In the *Odyssey* men consult oracles; Odysseus goes to Dodona, Agamemnon to Pytho, — a point of affinity with the Homeric *Hymns*. In the *Iliad* is no sign of individual ownership of land such as is clear in the *Odyssey*. The grammar of the *Odyssey* is nearer to that of later Greek usage, while its versification approximates more closely to Hesiod than to the *Iliad*. A *pax Olympica* has succeeded the primitive quarrels of the gods who debated the fate of Troy. Olympus itself is more remote, *never shaken by winds nor wetted by rain nor any snow, but over it hovers the bright air without a cloud.*

Comparison of Iliad and Odyssey

Something of this mellow brightness prevades the whole *Odyssey* with its reminiscences of "old, unhappy, far-off" quarrels and battles. The *causa teterrima belli*, Helen, the curse of Troy, *where all men shudder at me*, receives Telemachus in the gleaming palace of Menelaus; there she tells anecdotes of the Trojan siege and weaves, 'like Artemis,' her violet wools. The imaginations of the Greeks of the classical period dwelt on the image of the Helen who brought to Ilios 'no dower but ruin,' fitly named *Hell of ships, Hell of men, Hell of cities*, beautiful and treacherous like a lion's whelp that fawns on its master, till one day it slays instead, and the house is defiled with blood. But the less robust taste of a later age was charmed by Helen of Sparta, pouring into the wine a soothing drug to beguile pain and care,

> "That nepenthes which the wife of Thone
> In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena."

The *Odyssey* is the picture of the sunset of Greek heroic life — the sunset of a stormy day. "It is the work of Homer's old age," wrote Longinus; "you see the ebb and flow of greatness, an

imagination wandering in the fabulous and incredible, as though the ocean were withdrawing into itself, laid bare within its own boundaries." The *chanson de geste*, an echo of history, however embellished, has given place to the *roman d'aventure*. Yet even the fairy-tale element in the *Odyssey* is not, as Strabo pointed out, wholly without foundation, a mere prodigious fiction. As the Carthaginian periplus of Himilcon was put into Latin verse by Avienus, so the poet of the wanderings of the *Odyssey* may perhaps have followed some Phoenician periplus when he made his hero cruise through seas strange to the Ionians, but not uncharted — 'for the Phoenicians made them known.'[1] The traffic of the Phoenicians, to which there are several allusions in the Homeric Poems, had, no doubt, secured them a sort of thalassocracy before the supremacy of the Greek mariners in the prehistoric Mediterranean. M. Bérard has recently made a close comparison of the voyage of Odysseus with the *Instructions Nautiques*, with the result that the 'outer geography' of the *Odyssey* can never again be lightly dismissed as the geography of fairyland. This part of the *Odyssey* is rather, to use a mariner's phrase, a sort of 'mirror of the sea,' of the Mediterranean, that is, as it was known to the merchants of Sidon and Tyre.[2]

The geography of the Odyssey

The *Odyssey*, then, may mark the beginning of the Greek thalassocracy. But the fairy tales that are embroidered on the canvas of a Phoenician periplus are older than Odysseus or the sorrowful return of the Achaeans. He is the typical adventurer, the 'man of many shifts,' even in the oldest stratum of the *Iliad* (I 311). Since his character is already fixed in the *Iliad*, his

[1] Strabo 3. p. 150. References to the Phoenicians in the *Odyssey* are 4. 83–4, 618; 3. 272–85; 14. 288–310; 15. 445 ff.

[2] In *Les Phéniciens et l'Odyssée* (1902), M. Bérard aims at a rehabilitation of the Phoenicians, whose importance has been discredited by the majority of archaeologists. His championship of Semitic influences on Greek language and art betrays him into over-ingenuity in the matter of Greco-Semitic doublets; but his 'topology,' which supports the theory of a Semitic periplus, is for the most part independent of these.

saga may well antedate the Trojan campaign; the insular ruler of "barren and beggarly Ithaca" being chosen by some caprice of tradition for the type of the 'home-seeking hero.' His wanderings, like those of the Ancient Mariner who shot the albatross, are an expiation; his comrades have slain the oxen of the sun. But for that, he might have gone straight home, specially excepted from Athene's wrath. To reject that incident from the 'Original *Odyssey*' is to weaken the dramatic mechanism of the 'Home-coming'. If inserted later, like the 'Embassy' in the *Iliad*, it was well inserted. It is the poet's device, the excuse for the episodes that are the essential ornament of an epic, and as such it was envisaged by some gifted redactor, if not by the original poet of the 'Return.'

In the *Iliad* a certain indistinctness of plan, a confused development, is felt by the most conservative. The organic unity of the *Odyssey* was the admiration of Aristotle; and even Wolf was impressed by the *integritas* which raises it as a composition far above the *Iliad*. Its anatomy is indeed more complex. It is true that Aristarchus and Aristophanes, the Alexandrians, set the fashion for later critics by rejecting rather more than a whole book at the end of the poem. But they ended the *Odyssey* at 23. 296, at the recognition by Penelope, to get rid of an anti-climax, which implies no dislocation. They felt that the encounter with the relatives of the slain wooers and the second descent into Hades, in spite of certain beauties (which have been admired by Sainte-Beuve), are a patchwork, and the internal evidence of post-Homeric language and imitations of earlier passages supports them. But it is not easy to cut out whole insulated Books from the *Odyssey* without disturbing its proportions, as you can cut the *Doloneia* and perhaps the 'Embassy' out of the *Iliad*. To an epic so closely knit only the 'kernel' theory could be applied.

Kirchhoff (1859) is the Wolf of the *Odyssey* and has revolutionized the attitude of modern scholarship. He constructed a ninth century 'Return' as critics of the *Iliad* have constructed a

'Wrath,' making that the touchstone of the rest, a magnet that attracted the later additions. His 'Return' begins at Book 5 with the actual departure of Hermes for Ogygia (unaccountably delayed in Book 1 of our *Odyssey*) and ends at 13. 184, at the point when the Phaeacians who had sent Odysseus home to Ithaca see from the shore their convoy turned to stone, and in deference to Poseidon's resentment against their too swift and safe cruisers renounce their carrying trade. Kirchhoff rejects from his 'Return' the whole of Books 8 (the games of the Phaeacians), and 10 (Aeolus: the Laestrygonians: Circe). He assigns to another poet of the same date the sequel (13. 185–23. 296), the Alexandrian limit of the *Odyssey*. But from this sequel he must of course omit Book 15, the return of Telemachus from Sparta. For in 15 is assumed the earlier part of the *Odyssey*, 1–4, the *Telemachia*, Kirchhoff's "second enlargement," added as late as 660 B.C. The seventh century poet of the *Telemachia* revised and interpolated the ninth century redaction in order to bring it into line with his additions. The elaborate ingenuity that is needed to account for these Telemachian interpolations[1] is the infirmity of Kirchhoff's argument. The adaptation has in fact been more skillful and thorough than in the case of the *Iliad*. Within the *Telemachia* itself Kirchhoff regards 1. 88–444 as a mere reflex of Book 2. It is indeed easy to show that Athene's advice to Telemachus is inconsistent and ill-judged; that the conduct of Telemachus, who by threatening the wooers weakens his own plans, is undiplomatic. The whole then, if we follow Kirchhoff, is borrowed from Book 2. But at 2. 260 there is a clear reference to the visit of Athene; this, Kirchhoff says, was interpolated by the poet of Book 1. The prayer of Athene to Zeus is granted in Book 1; Hermes is to go to Ogygia and release Odysseus in the seventh year of his lotus-eating captivity. But Hermes does not set out until Book 5. 14, a postponement which reminds one of the long delay that follows the promise of Zeus to Thetis in the *Iliad*. Kirchhoff would regard the passage in 5 as the original,

Kirchhoff

[1] 15. 1–300, 495–557; 16. 129, 322–451; 17. 31–166.

mechanically imitated by the poet of Book 1. It is of course essential that where the 'Return' and the *Telemachia* contain identical lines, the 'Return' should be the original.

Kirchhoff's theory of the growth of the *Odyssey* is based on a great number of discrepancies in the narrative, on verbal repetitions, where he thinks that the organic passage can be distinguished from the mechanical imitation, and the like. His particular arguments do not always convince. There is not, for instance, in the whole body of Homeric epic, a single discrepancy of detail which one could not throw into the shade by parallels from Cervantes, Scott, and Thackeray, to range no farther.

The bewilderment that is introduced by the subjectivity of the aesthetic criticism of the *Odyssey* may be illustrated from every book of the poem. For Kirchhoff the fight with Irus in Book 18 is an old ballad, for Wilamowitz it is a comparatively late parody. Kirchhoff rejects 23. 153 ff. on the ground that while Odysseus takes a bath, Penelope is sitting neglected — which betrays a lack of proper feeling incredible in an original poet. All such discussions end, as de Goncourt said, with the simple assertion *J'ai plus de goût que vous*. But in Homeric criticism there are no steps backward. Linguistic, archaeology, the comparative study of the epic type, the history of the saga and of local cults, all these currents flow in the same direction; all tend to the disintegration of the present structure of the Homeric epic. It is not easy to imagine what convulsion of criticism should make that stream flow backward. Some form, therefore, of Kirchhoff's theory, some rearrangement of the *Telemachia* and the 'Return,' will continue to hold the field, just as, for the *Iliad*, all modern criticism, even the 'kernel' theory, is based on the hints of Wolf's *Prolegomena*. Even the exaggerations of Wilamowitz, Seeck, and Niese have not discredited Kirchhoff nor changed the fashion. Seeck believed in two independent Odysseys, of which we have in the 'Return' a contamination; in the earlier version, the recognition by Penelope was not delayed until Book 23;

Aesthetic criticism

Seeck

both she and Eurycleia helped Odysseus in his plot against the suitors. Bechtel follows the same fashion in imagining a phantom 'Original *Iliad*' in which the story was quite different, a meager unstrung narrative with a diary of twelve days, nine in which there is no action at all, followed by three days of fighting, so arranged that Patroclus, Hector, and Achilles all fall on the same day. In the eyes of such critics the perfect epic has the symmetry of a drama. Koechly has actually cut out of the *Odyssey* five essential 'rhapsodies' which could be put together like the five acts of a tragedy — a fact which for him stamps them as the work of the original poet. This is to confuse the canons of two types of literature, as Euripides confused them when he wrote his *Troades*, a mere succession of scenes from the epic. A reaction to the more liberal Aristotelian view of the epic as a game of digressions would greatly narrow the field of Homeric speculation.

The most striking and most Odyssean episode in the *Odyssey* is the descent into Hades in Book 11. In the whole of the epic no adventure has appealed more strongly to the imagination of later poets. But it is improbable that it belonged to the original 'Return.' The advice that Teiresias gives to Odysseus serves no apparent end, since Circe, who had sent him in search of it, herself, later (12. 39), gives the hero a far more useful itinerary. Perhaps the episode was tacked on to the passage in Book 12 by a poet who saw in it an opening for the marvelous and moving when he made the sorceress send the over-bold adventurer to the shores of Oceanus *to know death twice, while all men else die once for all.* A genius for purple patches of this sort is hardly to be ranked lower than the genius of an original poet. Not from Circe, however, but from Teiresias, Odysseus hears of his last wandering and his end. *From the sea shall thine own death come, the gentlest death there be, which shall end thee, foredone with smooth old age.* In the long procession that follows Teiresias, some, like his mother, Anticleia, stay for speech with Odysseus and vain embraces; of others there is only a glimpse as they pass. The long catalogue of fair women, like that famous

Odyssey 11

lost catalogue of Hesiod, the *Eoiae*, is a review of dead heroines. Tyro and Antiope, Alcmene and fair Epicaste, the mother of Oedipus, lovely Chloris and Leda,—all declare their lineage and cruel fate. Towards the end, the review of famous names is less detailed, but none the less effective. Some critics object to the bare enumeration of Phaedra, and Procris, and fair Ariadne, and Maera, and Clymene, on the ground that the poet becomes a mere nomenclator. Nothing can be more telling than such nomenclature, as Virgil saw when he imitated this passage in his sixth Book. Each name calls up some memory of romance, the " print and perfume " of a tale of bygone passion, and the poet passes on to the next before the whole story has been envisaged by the hearer or reader. It is the method of the *Ballade* of Villon : —

The Catalogue of Women

La royne Blanche comme lis,
Qui chantoit à voix de seraine ;
Berte au grant pié, Bietris, Allis ;
Haremburgis qui tint le Maine,
Et Jehanne, la bonne Lorraine. . . .

The heroes of Greece follow : Agamemnon, son of Atreus, sorrowing, and accusing Clytemnestra of his death, a variation of the account given by Nestor in Book 3 ; Achilles, Patroclus, Antilochus, each asking of those that were dear to him. Only Ajax stood aloof in sullen wrath for the award of the arms of Achilles : *Would that I had never won in that contest!* cries Odysseus. But the proud spirit of the other, like Virgil's Dido, would have none of his enemy's vain remorse. Here, at line 565, there is a distinct shift of scenery. The review has ceased, and now there is a revelation of Minos giving sentence from his throne, and the hunter Orion driving the very beasts that he had slain on the lonely hills. Then the great miscreants of Greek legend : Tantalus, the type of unfulfilled desire, still straining like one athirst; Sisyphus of Corinth, the type of sinful weakness, a byword of vague treachery, urging his stone uphill, but the weight ever drove him back as it rolled to the plain, *the ruthless stone.* Last of all comes

the phantom of Heracles surrounded by the clamorous dead, himself *like black night, peering about him like one ever about to shoot*, the type of the man of restless force and hard adventures whom Zeus has set amid toils, like Agamemnon.

In the fifth century Polygnotus read this scene in his *Odyssey*, and illustrated it in his paintings. Aristarchus suspected the whole passage. The most plausible explanation of this picture of retribution and expiation, an allegory of human life, is that of Wilamowitz. The passage is tinged with Orphism, is an echo of the sixth century when the mysteries were teaching that only the purified and initiated escape the terrors of Hades. Onomacritus is the scapegoat of all forgeries of oracles and *Orphica* in the sixth century; and to him Wilamowitz[1] assigns 11. 566–635. This is of course pure conjecture. If in the sixth century Onomacritus could write verse as fine as this, it seems strange that he should have limited himself to anonymous interpolations, or to the special forgeries of the oracles of Musaeus and the *Orphica* that brand him in the tradition. On the other hand, the fashion of anonymity or rather the effort to merge one's poetical identity in Homer's was still predominant, because it was still possible to borrow his trademark.

Orphism

The belt of Heracles in 11, with its decorations of rows of animals and battles and violent deeds, suggests to Wilamowitz the black-figured Corinthian vases of the sixth century. On these, too, Heracles is attended by Hermes and Athene, named in 11 as his escorts to the underworld. But to ask whether the vases reflect the *Odyssey*, or both poet and decorator echo some contemporary Orphic original, is to confuse by raising questions that we can never answer; it is as rash as the effort to make a selection from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of the poems of Onomacritus.

For the next five centuries, so long as there were Greek poets, they wrote under the spell of Homer. From that inexhaustible

[1] Wilamowitz took the suggestion from the scholiast on 11. 604, who attributed that verse to Onomacritus.

fountain the lyric poets in the seventh and sixth centuries, the 'springtime of song,' drew their phrases and images, and embroidered their poems with allusions to the legends of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The tragedians, for the most part, sought their plots in the Cyclic epics. But there was never a tragedy put on the Greek stage that did not echo the language of Homer. Even in the decadence of their literature the Greeks never lost their appreciation of his unapproachable excellence and charm. Homer was still *the light of the Muses, the ageless mouth of all the world* to Antipater of Sidon,[1] the Syrian Greek of the second century B.C. Another poet of the *Anthology*[2] dwelt on the unfading freshness of the Homeric narrative: *Still we hear the bitter cry of Andromache, still we see all Troy toppling from her foundations, and the battling of Ajax, and Hector, bound to the horses, dragged under the city's crown of towers. All this through the Muse of Maeonides, the poet with whom no one country adorns herself as her own, but the zones of both worlds.* The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are written in a style that suits the taste of all ages and never becomes antiquated. In that style perfect simplicity and directness of expression have flowered into the highest and most permanent form of art, vigorous and varied, yet always delicate and highly wrought. The Homeric imagination conceived a limited range of human characters, limited, that is, by the simple and noble civilization reconstructed in the Poems. The great essential types are there; the fighter, the hunter, the crafty adventurer, the faithful wife, the seaman, gods and goddesses walking the earth among men, beautiful, treacherous women, and old, blind bards. In the *Iliad*, that epic of an episode, the revengeful wrath of the warrior, we have all the scenery of primitive battles, the black ships, the sea-beach and the plain as the background and setting of the encampment, blazing watch fires at night, and by day the dust and heat of the assault as the waves of fight rolled backward and forward, the groans and cries of men slaying and being slain, exhorting to fight

Homeric types

[1] *Anth. Pal.* 7. 6. [2] *Anth. Pal.* 9. 97.

for a lost cause, like Sarpedon, or striking terror into a whole army by a single shout, like Achilles at the trench.

From all that we turn to the *far-echoing beach where the sea washes the pebbles clear*, or *grows dark with a noiseless swell before it breaks;* to the orchards of Alcinous, the great garden within its hedge, where *tall trees grow and blossom, pear trees and pomegranates, and apple-trees with bright fruit, and sweet figs, and olives in their bloom. . . Pear upon pear waxes old, and apple on apple, yea and cluster ripens upon cluster of the grape, and fig upon fig;*[1] to the great still cave on the enchanted island of Calypso, like a coral island in the South Seas, where Odysseus wearied of pleasure as he had never wearied of hardships.

The Homeric view of human life is always serious and sad. The speeches that most enforce attention are the poignant reflections of doomed or dying men, of Lycaon, who after enduring the bitterness of slavery had come home to Ilios after much pain only to be slain on the twelfth day by the implacable Achilles;[2] or Hector "slain on a point of honour" or Priam 'utterly unblest,' braving *what no other man on earth hath braved before, to stretch forth my hand toward the face of the slayer of my sons.*[3] *For there is nothing more pitiable than man, of all things that breathe and move on earth.*[4]

Homeric reserve

How much is left unsaid, and with what fine rhetorical judgment, one may measure by a comparison of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* with the manner of later Greek heroic epics. Apollonius of Rhodes, Quintus of Smyrna, Nonnus the Egyptian, each in turn tried to be the Homer of his age. They were all too eager to show how much they knew. They were always explaining, and left nothing to the imagination of their readers. Nor could they secure the air of reality that helps to give life and impressiveness to the Homeric epic, written as it was when men believed profoundly in the existence of the gods and their intervention in human affairs. For all their elabo-

[1] *Od.* 7. 114. [2] *Il.* XXI. [3] *Il.* XXIV 506. [4] *Il.* XVII 443.

ration of detail,[1] which makes their work, contrasted with the Homeric frieze, seem like a mosaic, the later epic poets did not succeed in conveying so vivid a picture of the intimate life of Greece, of the minor antiquities ignored by the dramatists and lyric poets. Homer, as the Greeks said, was capable of everything. No poet has described so well the deeds and passions of men: how they die fighting; how they grieve for the dead; how beautiful and noble can be the simplest, as well as the most splendid, setting of their lives.

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CHAPTER III

THE CYCLIC FRAGMENTS

From the eighth to the sixth century the composition of epic poetry was industriously maintained. We have the fragments of several lost epics, the titles of more; their very number argues industry rather than inspiration. Nearly all of those whose scanty fragments survive were written by poets who had no other aim than to supplement the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. To the antiseptic quality of the 'Homeric' poems and the name of Homer the cyclic epics owe their second-hand immortality. In the uncritical as in the imitative phase of Greek literary life, there was a marked tendency to credit Homer with the whole body of cyclic epic. Aristotle pointed out the qualitative differences of 'Cyclic' and 'Homeric'; the critics of Alexandria rejected from the canon all the epics but the *Iliad* and *Odyssey;* the 'ring' of epic poetry that had formed about the canonical poems then broke up, and the rejected epics gradually disappeared.

Their chronicles of the heroic legends had supplied plots to the drama; epic themes to the choral lyric of Stesichorus and Pindar; and to the rest of the lyric poets countless ornamental allusions. Their interest was now wholly antiquarian. The reading public of Greece was always limited: in the Christian centuries it was, like our own, preoccupied with prose; Homer himself was relegated to the schools. It would have been strange indeed if they, having at their command some twenty-eight thousand lines of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, should have cared to copy and recopy the second-rate epics.

We owe what we know of the cyclic poems to the fact that Photius, a Byzantine lexicographer, copied some extracts from a

prose handbook or set of notes on the 'cycle' by Proclus, whose identity and date are disputed. Athenaeus, Pausanias, and the marginal notes of *Venetus* A of the *Iliad* supplement Proclus. It is not likely that, in the second Christian century, the cyclic epics were still read; it is not even certain that they were extant, though Pausanias, about this time, writes as though he were familiar with the *Thebais* and the *Cypria*. Athenaeus, a little later, quotes a few lines from the cyclic poets to illustrate his antiquarian table talk. But a prose abstract such as that of Proclus sufficed for an age devoted to imitative rhetoric; with all these writers, moreover, we have arrived at a stage when erudition, like oratory, was imitative; the collectors of literature were content to echo the criticisms and the quotations of earlier writers. The ideal of Proclus in his abstracts was the ideal of a mythographer. In the cyclic poets he found a useful record of a certain sequence of mythological events — *ἀκολουθία πραγμάτων*, a history of the legends of Greece.

Proclus

When a poet insists on having in all the facts, the creative impulse has given place to the historical; his public is naturally content to read him in a prose version. The cyclic poets wrote round about the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, much as those epics had been formed about the kernels of the 'Wrath' and the 'Return.' The siege of Thebes was the first great dramatic encounter of the Hellenes, as the siege of Troy was the first dramatic collision of Hellenes and Asiatics. In the heroic saga Thebes ranked next to Troy. But Thebes had no Homer; only the uncritical called the *Thebais* 'Homeric.' When an Alexandrian, perhaps Zenodotus[1] made a formal arrangement of the epic 'cycle,' the Theban epics were brought into artificial connection with the cycle of the Trojan saga. It was a curious attempt to make the siege of Troy the pivot of the world's history.

An anonymous *Theogonia*, which belongs by right to a different

[1] So Welcker, whose great book *Der Epische Cyclus*, with its reconstruction of the cycle, has fallen into the background now that the cyclic poems are no longer believed to hold the answer to the Homeric question.

branch of the epic, formed the introduction, was a Book of Genesis with its union of Earth and Heaven. The *Titanomachia*, the *Oedipodea*, the *Thebais*, with its sequel the *Epigonoi*, were all originally independent of the Trojan cycle. The *Thebais* was the most famous epic of the Boeotian saga. According to Pausanias, Callinus, the elegiac poet, whose date falls about the middle of the seventh century, assigned the *Thebais* to Homer. This, though indirect, is the earliest reference to Homer that can be traced.[1] It shows at any rate that, in the seventh century, the phrase Ὁμηρικὰ ἔπη, or 'Homer' had a wider range of definition than merely the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. This was equally true a century later, and the 'recension of Peisistratus' may well have included the *Thebais*, *Epigonoi*, and *Cypria*, all at that time 'Homeric.' There is a cherished tradition that Homer gave away his epics, the *Cypria* to Stasinus, the *Little Iliad* to Thestorides. Lucian in the *True History* satirizes the tradition; Homer gives him an epic as a souvenir of their meeting in the Shades; it is a *Battle of the Blessed and the Damned*.

The Thebais

Even when it had been taken from Homer, the *Thebais*, like the *Epigonoi*, was never assigned to any other poet, a rare distinction for a cyclic epic. Pindar's *Ninth Nemean Ode*, the *Seven against Thebes* of Aeschylus, the first choral ode of the *Antigone* of Sophocles, all echo the *Thebais*. The *Epigonoi* described the more successful expedition of the 'After-born.' The *Taking of Oechalia*, attributed to Homer and to Creophylus of Samos, is the attempt of some Homerid to bring into the sphere of the Ionian epos a figure and a saga wholly alien — Heracles the hero of the Dorians.

The Taking of Oechalia

A poem that is assigned to two or more poets may safely be called anonymous. The *Cypria* was credited to Homer, Hegesias, and Stasinus of Cyprus. Herodotus was, as far as we know, the first skeptic as to 'Homeric' authorship. He refused to call the

[1] Bergk gives to Semonides of Amorgos (*circa* 625 B.C.) the fragment usually attributed to Simonides of Ceos, in which *Il.* VI 146 is quoted as the 'noblest utterance of the man of Chios.'

Cypria 'Homeric,' on the ground of a contradiction with the *Iliad*. With the *Cypria* opens the true Trojan cycle. It covers a period of about thirty years, ending where the *Iliad* begins, in the tenth year of the war. About forty lines of the poem are extant. The effort to bring other localities into line with the Trojan saga is already obvious in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. In *Il.* V 43–47, Idomeneus of Crete slays Phaistos. Here we have the skeleton of a Cretan saga in which, perhaps, Idomeneus besieged his neighbor, the eponymous hero of Phaistos. In the *Cypria* the Greek heroes make a false start and sack Teuthrania which they mistake for Troy. The whole incident with the wounding of Telephus the Mysian, of whom Euripides was to make a typical ragged hero, is a part of some Mysian saga, absorbed by the poet who set out to compose a varied epic which should introduce the *Iliad*. The legends of the *Cypria* were popular with the tragedians. Telephus, Philoctetes, Palamedes, whose treacherous death at the hand of Odysseus, *quia bella vetabat*, made a strong impression on Vergil (*Aen.* II 81), Iphigenia at Aulis, Peleus and Protesilaus, were all derived from the *Cypria*. The poet of the *Odyssey* had echoed and developed the briefer allusions of the *Iliad;* the poet of the *Cypria* transformed the allusions of the *Iliad* into whole episodes. One is reminded of the *Odyssey* by an air of magic that colors the incidents of the poem. Telephus is miraculously healed; Lynceus, who belongs to the Messenian saga, has sight of superhuman keenness; Nemesis, here the mother of Helen, like Proteus, puts on all shapes in her flight from Zeus. The twelve lines that describe her metamorphoses are the longest fragment preserved.

The Cypria

The *Iliad* follows the *Cypria* in the cycle; the *Aethiopis* is dove-tailed into the *Iliad*. That the sequence might be unmistakable its author, Arctinus of Miletus (*circa* 750 B.C.), or some editor of the cycle, boldly struck off the epithet of Hector (ἱπποδαμοῖο) in the last verse of the *Iliad*, and replaced it with a sentence (ἦλθε δ' Ἀμάζονν), *Then came the Amazon*, to introduce his episode of the coming of Penthesilea, a

The Aethiopis

figure unknown to Homer. The *Aethiopis* has many parallels with the *Iliad*. It is really an 'Achilleis' though its title is derived from Memnon of Ethiopia, son of the Dawn. He slays Antilochus, the friend of Achilles, who avenges him as he had avenged Patroclus. When Arctinus made Achilles kill Thersites, he had not forgotten that, in the *Iliad*, it was to Achilles that Thersites was peculiarly offensive.

The *Sack of Ilios* by Arctinus was perhaps not originally a separate poem. For the sake of historical continuity, no less precious to the Alexandrian editor than his continuity of action to the Homeric poet, the two lays were separated by the *Little Iliad*, anonymous, since tradition gave it to six separate poets, notably Lesches of Lesbos. Its heroes were Philoctetes and Neoptolemus, striking figures in the Sophoclean drama, a fact that has almost obscured for us their claim to be heroes of the epic. Aristotle named ten tragedies that had been carved out of the *Little Iliad*. The opening verse, which survives,[1] is an illustration of the method of Horace's too ambitious *scriptor cyclicus olim*, who begins his epic with the sounding line: Fortunam Priami cantabo et nobile bellum — *The fate of Priam I will sing and the famous war*. The hero of the *Little Iliad* is Odysseus; it is a record of his shifts and adventures and successes. The poem ended, for the purposes of the cycle, with the entry of the Wooden Horse.

The Little Iliad

The *Sack of Ilios* by Arctinus was placed next. From this epic Vergil derived his picture of the sack in the Second Book of the *Aeneid*, though, according to Macrobius, he took it at second hand from the epic poet Peisander, now usually assigned to the sixth century.

The Sack of Ilios

The painful and straggling home-comings of the heroes, especially of the Atreidae, were the subject of the *Returns*, ascribed to Agias. It told the story of the tragic fate of Agamemnon, the vengeance of Orestes, and the sailing of Menelaus to Egypt.

[1] *Ilias Parva, fr.* 1. Ἴλιον ἀείδω καὶ Δαρδανίην εὔπωλον, *Ilios I sing and the land of Dardanus with its famous horses.*

Neoptolemus goes to Epirus, the first hint of the descent of the royal house of Epirus from Achilles; warned by Thetis, he goes overland by way of Thrace, where he meets Odysseus (cp. *Od.* 9. 39). The wrath of Athene hangs like a cloud over the whole poem as the wrath of Poseidon had darkened the fortunes of Odysseus. There are few episodes in the *Returns* that were not inspired by the *Odyssey*. But, by a caprice of quotation, it happens that the only extant fragment describes the transformation of Aeson by the magic of Medea, an incident from the saga of the Argonauts.

The Returns

Eugammon of Cyrene (*circa* 566 B.C.) wrote the last poem of the cycle, the *Telegonia*, as a sequel to the *Odyssey*. Like all sequels it is an anticlimax, which betrays the breakdown of the epic impulse in the sixth century; the love of the marvelous had gained on the preference for spirited and heroic action. In this poem the prophecy of Teiresias in *Od.* 11. 119 is fulfilled. Telegonus, the son of Odysseus and Circe, coming 'from the sea' to Ithaca on a quest like that of Telemachus, slays his father unawares. Penelope marries Telegonus, Circe marries Telemachus. The author of the poem, having removed his personages to fairyland and given them immortality at the hands of Circe, had made the expiring effort of the cyclic genius to leave nothing untold.

The Telegonia

After that first critical reaction in Herodotus, one epic after another was denied to Homer and ceased to be 'Homeric.' For Aristotle, the cyclic poets are 'the others,' and are quoted only to point by contrast the perfections of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Their personal identity stands or falls with Homer's; for it would be a mere perversity of philology to obliterate the personality of Homer and accept that of Arctinus or Lesches.

The cyclic epics left a deep mark on the poetry of Greece. Stesichorus drew on the cyclic rhapsodies no less than on Homer; Pindar's character of Achilles in the *Third Nemean* was taken, not from the *Iliad*, but from the *Aethiopis;* to Pindar, Cycnus and Amphiaraus were as familiar as Hector. Euripides adopted

and exaggerated the cyclic degradation of Menelaus and Odysseus Of the nine cyclic epics of which we have any knowledge that counts, less than one hundred lines survive. They might easily have been quoted from epics as good as the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*. The frequent neglect of the digamma, the dozen instances of late or un-Homeric language, prove little. But we are not in a position to question the judgment of antiquity which discarded the cyclic poems; nor is it likely that a happy find of a manuscript of the *Cypria* or the *Thebais* would reverse that judgment.

The weakening of the epic impulse in the seventh and sixth centuries was steady but slow, and even in the fifth, when lyric and the drama were the types best suited to the age, there were certain minor poets who chose to sing of heroic exploits in hexameters rather than of themselves or the immediate interests of men. About 650 B.C. PEISANDER of Camirus in Rhodes wrote his *Heracleia*, of which we have only a few fragments. The Heracles saga as we meet it in later literature owes much to his imagination. The popular conception of the hero carrying a club as his only weapon was derived from this epic, which seems to have recounted at length *all the great deeds that he wrought with toil*. So says Theocritus, if he really wrote the twentieth Epigram, *On the Statue of Peisander*, ascribed to him, a bronze figure set up, as he says, *after many a month and many a year* to the poet who had first done justice to the untiring son of Zeus.

Peisander

Early in the fifth century PANYASIS of Halicarnassus, said to be the kinsman of Herodotus, jealous of the fame of Peisander, himself composed a *Heracleia* in fourteen books. Of its merit we cannot judge from the fragments, about forty lines, that survive. But Panyasis acquires a certain importance from the fact that he was the leader of a revival of epic composition, a revival that could only be spasmodic. The chief epic poet of this century was ANTIMACHUS of Colophon, whose activity lasted as late as the close of the Peloponnesian war (404 B.C.). His masterpiece was the *Thebais*, of which about

Panyasis

Antimachus

sixty verses are extant. It was so long, so dignified, so full of interesting information, that it could not be neglected. The name of Antimachus was handed down by the critics, Greek and Roman, always with respect but without enthusiasm. His elegiac poem *Lyde* was a passionless imitation, elaborate and uninspired, of the *Nanno* of Mimnermus.[1] About the same time Choerilus of Samos wrote a historic epic of the conflict of Greece and Persia, the *Perseis*, of which we have a few verses. The poem must have had a vogue, however short-lived, at Athens, where the Persian war was a popular theme. Choerilus lived for a time at the court of Archelaus of Macedon, the patron of literature, and to be invited by Archelaus was in itself a proof of celebrity.

Choerilus

With this last group of poets, who have little significance for literature except in so far as they mark the historical sequence, the epic after that brief renaissance, disappears, not to be galvanized into life until, in the Alexandrian centuries, to write like Homer was again the ambition of the learned.

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ANTIMACHUS

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[1] This elegy had a great vogue both at Alexandria and Rome. Cp. the scornful remark of Catullus 95. 10: at populus tumido gaudeat Antimacho.

CHAPTER IV

HESIOD

By the Greeks of the classical period Homer and Hesiod were regarded as the great instructors of Greece. Homer, they vaguely said, taught men war, by which they meant rather the manly virtues that are useful in warfare. Hesiod taught agriculture. But the contrast of the Ionian epos and the epos of central Greece, the contrast of heroic and didactic, was too evident to be obscured. The 'Hesiodic manner' and the 'Homeric manner' expressed two wholly different ways of writing epic. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* had been composed for the entertainment of an aristocratic society. To ignore the life and energies of the people was almost a convention of the heroic epic. The relations of men with one another and the gods were on a scale that did not include the peasant or his interests, did not include even the common soldier who fought before Troy. It is due to this unconscious insolence that the swineherd Eumaeus in the *Odyssey* proves to be a king's son who had been kidnapped by Phoenicians; the very harvest scene on the shield of Achilles is a picture of farming on a great estate, whose owner leans on his staff and looks on at an army of toiling men.

The poetry of Hesiod is the mirror of a very different society. He wrote for men whose interests centered, not in war or tales of war, but in the daily life of a small Boeotian village, in the changes of seasons and crops, in a peasant farmer's hard and bare existence. With Hesiod, the poet of the serfs, the common people take up the foreground. The *Works and Days* was not meant to be, like the *Iliad*, an ornament of the banquet; it was composed for the instruction of the village

The peasant's poet

street, for men who, if they should follow Hesiod's advice, would never waste their time in social gatherings. With the change of matter and of outlook the manner has changed. Hesiod broke with the heroic tradition of anonymity; he is a subjective poet whose well-marked individuality is revealed in his poems. In the *Works and Days* he tells us that his father, growing weary of the precarious life of a coast trader, emigrated from Aeolic Cymé,[1] *fleeing*, as he says in his quaint manner, *not riches, nor wealth, nor prosperity, but hard poverty, the gift of Zeus to men*. He settled near Helicon in a wretched village, Ascra, *cold in winter, hot in summer, never good to live in*.[2]

Birthplace

It is not clear whether Hesiod was born before his father's emigration. He was always claimed by the Boeotians and is the poet of Boeotia, the first of a succession of distinguished fellow-countrymen who prove that the Athenian gibe at the crass air and crass stupidity of his native land was merely an expression of national prejudice such as, in Europe, in later times, was directed against the Dutch.

Date

Aeolic by descent, he spent his youth at Ascra, his riper age in western Locris, where he died, at Naupactus. The tradition, always bent on linking the poets and establishing a sort of poetic succession, made Hesiod the father of Stesichorus, the lyric poet. Both poets had Locrian interests, for it was from Locris that Stesichorus emigrated to Sicily. But Hesiod can hardly have lived later than 750 B.C.; his poetry echoes Homer and is echoed by poets of the seventh century, by which time the Hesiodic epic had become familiar to the Ionians. The legend that he competed with Homer at Chalcis and won the prize is clearly due to the Greek tendency to relate great names; unless, indeed, it symbolizes some phase in which

[1] The inroads of the Cimmerians from the regions now known as the Crimea into Asiatic Aeolis (*circa* 700 B.C.) may have caused some of the Aeolic colonists to migrate to Boeotia, their original home.

[2] *Works*, 637 ff. This passage contains the earliest extant reference to the Aeolians.

the Greeks displayed a passing preference for the didactic epic.[1]

As poem after poem ceased to be considered Homeric, till the Alexandrians reserved to Homer only the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, so several compositions once classed as 'Hesiodic' were gradually discarded. Of the epics that survive, the *Works and Days* without question, the *Theogony* almost certainly, are Hesiod's; the *Shield of Heracles* is by a later and inferior poet. The poems have come down to us in the mixed dialect of the Homeric epos with a greater proportion of Aeolic forms. The Doric coloring, more marked in the *Theogony* than in the *Works*, is possibly to be traced to the influence of Delphi. Whether Hesiod wrote in the Boeotian or Locrian dialect, whether the Homer whom he imitated had already been transliterated into Ionic, are questions that we cannot answer. His use of the digamma is so inconsistent that it furnishes no real evidence. The flexibility of epic verse gave the rhapsodes free play, and we may assume that Hesiod's dialect, like Homer's, was gradually adapted to an Ionian audience.[2]

Dialect

The *Works and Days* (Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι) is a poem of exhortation and instruction, an epic of detail. The Aeolic temperament as it worked on the shores of Asia Minor may be contrasted with the same temperament influenced by the atmosphere and superstitions of Boeotia. But it would not be safe to emphasize the contrast of environment, without taking into account the poet's peculiar personality and circumstances. The chief inspiration of the *Works* was the impulse to exhort and warn a shiftless brother, whose sins, as Hesiod chose to believe, were due to ignorance. Perses had won a lawsuit by

The Works and Days

[1] The *Contest of Homer and Hesiod*, a prose work dated by its mention of the Emperor Hadrian, is a perfectly worthless attempt of a late writer to transform a vague legend into history by the addition of picturesque details.

[2] Fick's theory of an Ionic recension of the Homeric poems at the beginning of the sixth century obliges him to assume for Hesiod a similar recension at about the same time. He believes that the *Works* and the *Theogony* were originally composed in the Boeotian and Locrian dialects.

bribery, and deprived Hesiod of his proper share of their father's estate. A certain unity is given to the first part of the poem by the exhortations directed in alternate paragraphs to Perses and the unjust judges, whom Hesiod addresses as 'Princes.' The poem falls naturally into four main divisions: 1. *The Exhortations* (1–382); 2. *The Precepts of Agriculture and Navigation* (383–694); 3. *The General Precepts* (695–764); 4. *The Calendar of Days* (765–end).

The first division of the *Works* is a manifesto, an assertion of the poet's rights in the name of justice. A prelude, easily detachable, is always open to suspicion; the Boeotians round about Helicon who, in the time of Pausanias (IX 31), rejected the first ten lines of invocation, are supported by most modern editors. The poem, then, begins with an allegory. There are two kinds of Strife (Ἔρις), the baleful Strife that breeds war and, a more familiar evil at Ascra, lawsuits; opposed to it is that healthy spirit of competition which urges a man to *plow and plant and set his house in order. O Perses*, cries the poet, *lay up these things in thy heart and never may that envious strife turn away thy soul from work.* That wish is the text of this hortatory epic. The Prometheus myth, which diverts Hesiod from his grievance, is introduced to account for the need of drudgery and for the other inevitable ills of man. Prometheus stole and gave to men the fire that Zeus had hidden. Then Zeus devised a curse to offset the stolen fire; he created Pandora, the Greek Eve: *Straightway from earth the glorious Hephaestus fashioned her, in the likeness of a shame-faced maiden, by the counsel of Zeus. The goddess bright-eyed Athene decked her with a girdle and raiment; about her neck the divine Charites and gracious Persuasion set necklaces of gold; the fair-haired Hours crowned her head with spring flowers; in her breast the messenger Hermes, the herald of the gods, set lies and deceitful words, and a heart of guile. And he named her Woman, Pandora, because all they that dwell on Olympus had given her gifts, woe for mortal men* (70 ff.).

The curses that escape from Pandora's jar, the dumb diseases

that stalk among men, suggest to Hesiod another digression, a famous picture of human decadence, the *Five Ages* of Mankind. Homer had more than once hinted at the degeneration of man, but Hesiod is bitter where Homer was resigned. In the Golden Age there was no need of toil, and when men died they became daemons, heavenly guardians of men. In the Silver Age sin begins, but is negative; a feebler race condemned to a long childhood and brief maturity displayed pride and neglected the gods; after death they were buried deep under ground. With the Bronze Age positive wickedness began; it was an age of violent men who slew one another and went down to Hades. So far there has been a regular progression in the fall of man. But the Fourth Age of the Heroes who fought before Thebes and Troy was better and wiser; it is not named by a metal; some heroes died, but others were translated to the Islands of the Blest. The interruption is a sign of the widespread interest in the heroic legends, or perhaps Hesiod, easily diverted from a sequence of thought, introduced the Heroic Age to complete his account of the fates of men after death. In the Fifth or Iron Age, the downfall is all the more sudden for the check. *Would that I had not lived in the fifth age!* wails Hesiod, *would that I had died first or been born later!*

The Five Ages

The allegory of the hawk and the nightingale which Hesiod relates to the judges is usually quoted as the earliest example of the beast fable. But it is not precisely a story with a moral like a fable of Aesop; its nearest parallel is rather the Old Testament allegory of the thistle and the cedar.[1] After a series of exhortations addressed alternately to Perses and the judges, the first division of the *Works* ends with a collection of disconnected proverbs. With the precepts of agriculture begins the positive instruction. The Greeks as a rule laid more stress on the ethical teaching of Hesiod, but it was as the poet of agriculture that he appealed to the Romans, and it was these precepts that were to be transfigured by the imagination

The Precepts of Agriculture

[1] 2 *Kings* xiv. 9.

of Vergil in the *Georgics*. Hesiod hardly ever attempts, like Vergil, to lift homely details. He knows nothing of the pleasure of the amateur which made the Roman poet delight in those details and linger over them.[1] Nor is he interested in the great forces of nature; the inspiration of a Parmenides is far from Hesiod. There is hardly a trace of the idyll in his epic, since he cares little for the human interest essential to an idyll. The *Works*, however, reveals Hesiod himself, the type of the grumbling farmer of any age; it sounds the true peasant note; not till Theocritus does one hear that note again in Greek literature and perhaps there only in the *Lityerses-song*.

For the most part, the dry professional instructions of this part of the *Works* might as well have been composed in prose, had prose existed for Hesiod as a literary form. But here and there he is betrayed out of the didactic manner into a sudden and short flight of poetry which rises to the Homeric level. Such is the description of winter and the violence of the north wind. *From the depths of horse-breeding Thrace it hurls its blast over the wide sea; the earth groans loud and the forest. Many an oak with its high foliage, many a sturdy pine in the mountain valleys it seizes and lays low on the fruitful earth; then all the countless trees of the forest clamor aloud* (507 ff.). There you have the grand manner; it seems incredible, though it is truly Hesiodic, that the passage should end in practical advice on the choice of winter clothing.

On Navigation

Hesiod had a genuine horror of the sea, but if one lives near the coast, one must not neglect the coasting trade. Choose a safe season and take short voyages, avoiding the dangers of small boats; of fishing he says nothing. Between the two first divisions of the *Works* and the third, the general precepts, one can make out a loose connection of interest, the interest of the reformation and instruction of Perses. The essential foundation is industry; Perses must work. But he must be equipped with technical knowledge, and that is not enough; he

[1] *Georg.* III 285. Singula dum capti circumvectamur amore.

must observe certain general precautions, must avoid things of ill omen. Hesiod, like the priests of Delphi, who echo him in their oracles, knew the power of the proverb.[1] It is the current proverbial philosophy which comes home to all men, and it is the same for Greek and barbarian. The prophecy that his mother taught King Lemuel, her advice to one choosing a wife, echoes the acid wisdom of Semonides of Amorgos; Hesiod's maxim that you should leave your relatives alone and be on good terms with your neighbor is the advice of Solomon: *Go not into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity; better is a neighbor that is near than a brother far off* (*Proverbs* xxvii. 10). Many of the homely proverbs that found a final though loose setting in the *Works*, drifted there, no doubt, from other collections such as that which was ascribed to Pittheus, the wise king of Troezen. Here and there is a hint of Orphism or of the teachings of Pythagoras; one must not sit on immovable things, nor cross a river with hands unwashed, nor pollute life with the baleful atmosphere of death.

The Proverbs

Throughout all this gnomic advice, derived rather from economics than from ethics, Hesiod reveals a narrow and bigoted outlook, an illiberal attitude to friends and kindred, an embittered egotism in all the relations of life.

The *Calendar of Days* is at least as old as Heracleitus (*circa* 500 B.C.), who ridiculed its superstition.[2] The *Works* is a map of the work of the year; the *Days* is concerned with the daily routine of the Boeotian farmer's life; it is the classic collection of superstitions as to lucky and unlucky days such as are met with in all countries and all times. For the superstitious to-day, good luck or bad is often associated with certain

The Calendar of Days

[1] Cp. the oracle quoted in Herodotus VI 86 with *Works* 285. It may well have been Delphic or Orphic influence that introduced into Hesiod's vocabulary such enigmatic words as *φερέοικος*, house-carrier, = snail; *πέντοζον*, the five-branched, = hand, and the like. Cp. with the preceding, Herrick's description of the loss of a finger: "One of the five straight branches of my hand Is lopt already."

[2] Plutarch, *Cam.* 19.

days of the week; but in Hesiod's calendar it is with the moon that the luck changes. He reviews, in his unsystematic fashion, the days in their order, the luck as it waxes and wanes; the days that contain certain numbers, — *Avoid all fifth days since they are harsh and horrid* (802); and the days suitable for certain tasks, — *Begin weaving on the twelfth.* No day is wholly unlucky.[1] In his lunar calendar Hesiod mentions several tasks that were ignored in the *Works*, such as making fences, sheep-shearing, boat-building, all, however, suited to the life of the Boeotian peasant. The poem closes with three verses obviously added to connect with it the lost *Ornithomanteia*, ascribed to Hesiod.

Pausanias records that the Boeotians of his time allowed only the *Works* to be Hesiodic. But the *Theogony*, though composed with a very different inspiration, bears all the marks of genuineness. The influence of Delphi on Hesiod is not to be precisely defined, but in any case the *Theogony* is hieratic poetry closely allied to the earliest religious epos described in the first chapter. The disproportionate prelude, or mixture of preludes, forming more than one tenth of the poem, is later work, a local Heliconian composition which describes how the Muses *taught Hesiod his fair song as he pastured his sheep below sacred Helicon.* The poem, which begins at line 116, is a genealogical epic, a descriptive catalogue with an occasional digression into allegory or myth. It is a somber picture of that struggle of the immortals for supremacy which ended in the victory of Zeus. It is often, as in the catalogue of the fifty Nereids (240–262), a mere list of names. The myth of Prometheus, the savior, and the creation of Pandora reappear with more detail. In the remains of Greek literature Hesiod's *Theogony* is the only systematic treat-

The Theogony

[1] In the fourteenth-century *Kalendar of the University of Oxford* (Oxford Historical Society, 1904) the members of the University are solemnly warned in Latin verse against two days in every month, called 'Egyptian days' from the plagues of Egypt; *e.g.* the 'seventh day from the end of the first month' must be avoided as unlucky for blood-letting, while the 'sixteenth day of a thirty-one-day month' is propitious for any enterprise.

ment of the pedigree of the gods, a fact which to some extent justifies a much criticised remark of Herodotus that 'Homer and Hesiod framed the Theogony of the Greeks.' Hesiod is the poet of the Titans, who were to leave in literature the impression of unmeasured force. His description of their combat with Zeus is one of his rare flights of impressive poetry. At the end are fifty verses on gods who married mortals. Then Hesiod announces that he will tell the tale of mortal women whom the gods wedded, lines of transition in which, as at the close of the *Works*, we detect the effort to make even Hesiod's poems consecutive. Here followed the famous lost epic the *Eoiae*, which derived its awkward name from the repetition of the words ἢ οἵη, *or such as*, a phrase which, in the true Hesiodic manner, introduced every paragraph with its fresh instance of the union of a god and a mortal. The *Eoiae*, perhaps, formed part of the lost *Catalogue of Women*. Though we possess about one hundred lines of the *Catalogue* and forty lines of the *Eoiae*, it is not easy to judge of their poetic merit or their genuineness. There was a tendency in the seventh and sixth centuries to ascribe to Hesiod any poem that displayed the Hesiodic characteristics, gnomic moralizing and a genealogical interest.

The Eoiae

It is the more remarkable that he should have been credited with the *Shield of Heracles*, an epic in the heroic manner. The story of Alcmene, with which it opens, is plainly borrowed from the Hesiodic *Catalogue;* the rest of the poem perhaps formed part of a *Heracleia*. The description of the shield is an extravagant and tasteless imitation of the Homeric Shield of Achilles. Longinus quotes a line which he calls 'repulsive, not terrible,' and questions the genuineness of the whole epic. Such were the poems, if we include the lost *Melampodia*, the *Astronomia*, and the *Maxims of Cheiron*, that grouped themselves about the name of Hesiod, just as the cyclic epics, because they dealt with the heroic saga, were drawn into the Homeric current.

The Shield of Heracles

Only from the *Works* and the *Theogony* may one judge the

style of Hesiod. Few poets can have offered such opportunities for interpolation as this poet of the moral formula and of genealogies. Hardly any aesthetic test can be applied to the *Works*, which has survived in defiance of the canons of unity, or proportion, or coherence of thought. Several attempts have been made by modern critics to separate the original nucleus from the later additions, but none are convincing.[1]

We may rest in the knowledge that we have the Hesiodic epic that was widely circulated in the Ionia of the seventh and sixth centuries, was imitated by Semonides, Theognis, and Alcaeus, attacked by Xenophanes and Heracleitus, admired by all educated Greeks. A strange commentary on the ethical standards of Greece is the fact that the *Works* should have held its ground for centuries as the text-book of ethics in Greek schools; that this philosophy, not broad, not noble, not even expedient, conceived by a peasant for the use of peasants as shrewd and selfish as himself, should have been taken for an inspired message to a great race.

Style

Hesiod was wholly out of touch with the cyclic inspiration; but the direct imitation of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* is the most striking feature of his style. He destroyed the symmetry of his *Five Ages* to introduce the Age of the Homeric Heroes; in the *Theogony* are about 126, in the *Works* about 87 set phrases borrowed from Homer; nor do these include many stock expressions which, in Hesiod's day, must have been the common property of all who wrote epic. But Hesiod's imitations are of the letter, not of the spirit, of Homer. His manner is profoundly original, absolutely alien from the Homeric, as a single parallel will show. When Homer makes Penelope compare her restless anxiety for Odysseus with the troubled song of the nightingale,

[1] The most destructive of these critics is Lehrs, *Quaestiones epicae*, 1837; Kirchhoff, in his *Hesiodos' Mahnlieder an Perses*, 1889, using the method that he had applied to the *Odyssey*, regards the addresses to Perses and the kings as the Hesiodic kernel; the remainder is due to the interpolations and expansions of later redactors.

he completes the picture: *Even as when the daughter of Pandareus, the brown, bright nightingale sings sweetly in the first season of the spring, from her place in the thick leafage of the trees, and with many a turn and trill pours forth her full-voiced music bewailing her child, dear Itylus, whom on a time she slew with the sword unwitting, Itylus, the son of Zethus the prince; even as her song, my troubled soul sways to and fro* (*Od.* 19. 518 ff.). Hesiod borrows from this passage when he speaks of the return of the swallow in spring, but he is concerned, not with the myth and its possibilities for a poet, but with the practical interest of the swallow's advent for the Boeotian farmer: *After the rising of Arcturus, the swallow, daughter of Pandion, with her shrill cry at dawn, flies back into the daylight among men. Before she comes back, prune your vines; that is the proper time* (*Works* 568 ff.).

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CHAPTER V

THE HOMERIC HYMNS AND EPIGRAMS

THE *Homeric Hymns* were ascribed to Homer in that uncritical period when almost any poem in the heroic manner might safely be called 'Homeric.' Even as late as Cicero, Philodemus the Epicurean, a poet himself and evidently no critic, cited the *Hymns* as Homer's. But the Alexandrians did not use them for their Homeric references, a case in which silence means rejection. The *Hymns* are plainly the work of rhapsodes, preludes composed to introduce recitations of the epic. Thucydides (III 104), quoting from the *Hymn to the Delian Apollo*, calls it a prelude; for him, too, it was still Homer. Of the thirty-four *Hymns* in our collection, nearly all end with a formula of leave-taking, the rhapsode's transition to the recitation to which the hymn was a solemn and essential prelude: *Goddess, queen of well-established Cyprus, having given thee honor due, I shall pass on to another hymn* (IV end). The prelude and the epic that followed were alike 'hymns' to the Greek, who used the word ὕμνος for any song, epic or lyric, sacred or secular: *First they sing a hymn to Apollo, and then a hymn in memory of the men and women of old* (I 160).

In date the *Hymns* range from the seventh century B.C. to the Christian era. Greek literature shows few traces of their influence. Theognis (110) seems to echo the *Delian Hymn*, Aristophanes quotes it (*Birds* 575); the reminiscences in the Alexandrian poets, Theocritus, Callimachus, and Apollonius of Rhodes, are not so certain. Written as the *Hymns* were by rhapsodes whose inspiration was almost wholly that of the Homeric school, the borrowings from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are the most obvious features

of their style; they were too imitative to lend themselves to imitation.

At the time when the oldest were composed, the digamma was in use, but vacillating as it vacillates in Homer. For the date of the *Hymns* the digamma is an unsafe guide, but it helps to determine their dialect. In the *Hymn to Aphrodite*, composed no doubt for the Cyprians, whose dialect was tenacious of the digamma, it is neglected only twice. The poet of that hymn had before him the *Hymn to Demeter*, which was composed by an Ionian for Attica; as one would expect, the digamma is there much less in evidence, though the poem is earlier. On the other hand, the *Delian Hymn*, composed for Ionians by Cynaethus of Chios, as tradition goes and Fick believes, contains a few passages from which the Aeolic digamma cannot be expelled. The coloring of the dialect in all the *Hymns* is decidedly Homeric, and there are not a dozen words in them that do not occur also in Homer or Hesiod.

Dialect

The first five form a group apart inasmuch as they are the best and the longest — too long, one would think, for mere preludes. The *Hymn to Hermes* has 580 verses; the two *Hymns to Apollo*, if read as a single poem, amount to 564 verses. Most critics, however, consent to ignore the manuscript tradition and regard the *Hymns* as two entirely different poems of separate authorship and date. The *Hymn to the Delian Apollo* ends at line 178 with the poet's farewell to the Delian maidens: *Remember me in the time to come, when any of earthly men, yea, any stranger that hath seen much and much endured comes hither and asks, Maidens, who is to you the sweetest singer of all that frequent this place, in whose song do you most delight? Then do you all answer with one voice: He is a blind man and dwells in rocky Chios; forever shall his songs be the fairest.* In the descriptions of the wanderings of Leto and the birth of Apollo on Delos, destined to be the meeting place of the 'long-robed Ionians,' the epic narrative style is varied once more by a purely lyric outburst: *Many are thy fanes and groves, and dear are all thy headlands*

The Delian Hymn

and high peaks of lofty hills and rivers flowing onwards to the sea (143 ff.); the mixture of styles is unusual in Greek epic. A Pindaric scholiast[1] assigned the *Hymn* to Cynaethus of Chios (*circa* 504 B.C.); it is easier to assume a mistake in the traditional date of Cynaethus than to believe that the *Hymn* is later than the seventh century.

The Pythian Hymn

From the *Pythian Hymn*, lyric apostrophe of the god is absent. The scene has shifted to central Greece, where, at Delphi, Apollo founds his oracle, and since he is after all a Dorian god, intrusts his shrine to traders from Dorian Crete. The *Delian Hymn* was written by a poet who had the Ionian sense of beauty, the Ionian charm of style; the *Pythian*, by a poet of central Greece, interested, like Hesiod, in etymology and the history of myth. To call the one 'Homeric' and the other 'Hesiodic' is a useful though not strictly accurate differentiation of their style and date.[2]

The Hymn to Hermes

The *Hymn to Hermes* (III) was admirably translated by Shelley in *ottava rima*. With the traditional history of Greek music for an uncertain guide, we may date the poem at least no earlier than the fortieth Olympiad (536 B.C.), when Terpander is supposed to have added three to the four strings of the lyre; in the *Hymn*, the lyre which Hermes invents is already seven-stringed. The poem is decidedly humorous, yet not a burlesque; a lively tale of the triumph of the precocious infant Hermes over the sedate Apollo.

The Hymn to Aphrodite

The poet of the *Hymn to Aphrodite* (IV) borrows the language of Homer, Hesiod, and the *Hymn to Demeter*. But his description of the meeting of Aphrodite and Anchises on 'many-fountained Ida' has a beauty that, though it may be called 'Homeric,' is independent of borrowing. The prayer of Anchises to Aphrodite that he may not live a *strengthless*

[1] See *supra*, p. 16.

[2] Gemoll (1886) has not converted modern scholars to his reaction in favor of regarding the two hymns as one. For more than a century the other view has been successfully maintained.

shadow among men, doomed to cruel immortality without immortal youth, introduces the tale of Tithonus, whose old age, *wretched and weary and detested by the gods*, made him hateful at last even to the Dawn: *She laid him in a chamber and shut the gleaming doors, and his voice flows on endlessly.*

The *Hymn to Demeter* (V), apart from its intrinsic beauty, has the peculiar interest attached to a classic that has been preserved in a single manuscript and restored to us by a lucky chance. It was discovered in 1780 by the German scholar Matthiae, in Moscow, perhaps the last place to which one would have looked for such a find. This *Hymn*, with its references to the Mysteries, may well have been written for Eleusis, the sole survivor of a whole body of hieratic poetry devoted to the Demeter legend. **The Hymn to Demeter** In Homer 'dread Persephone,' the goddess of the waste shore and barren willows, was for Odysseus the queen of Hades, all the more terrible because unseen. In Hesiod (*Theog.* 913) is a passing allusion to her carrying-off by Aidoneus. But for the poet of the *Hymn*, profoundly conscious of the religious symbolism of the myth, Persephone is the daughter of Earth, who for a season

> "Forgets the Earth, her mother,
> The life of fruits and corn,"

yet is restored with the leaves and flowers of spring. The religion of Eleusis was a religion of sorrow. The wandering Demeter, the Greek type of the sorrowing mother, with her passionate human grief, symbolized the wandering soul; the restoration of Persephone is the renewal of hope for man, here and hereafter. *Happy is he among mortal men who hath beheld these things!* cries this poet of the mystics of Eleusis; *but he that is uninitiate and hath no lot in them hath never equal lot in death beneath the murky gloom* (480 ff.).

The poem is full of movement and color: Demeter with her blazing torches rushes on in her search, or springs 'like a Maenad down a dark mountain woodland' to greet Persephone; the daughters of Celeus *speed along the hollow road-way, their hair, in*

color like the crocus, floating about their shoulders (177 ff.). When Persephone was snatched away, she was gathering *roses and crocuses, and violets in the soft meadow, and lilies and hyacinths and the narcissus which the earth brought forth as a snare to the fair-faced maiden, by the counsel of Zeus and to please the Lord with many guests. Wondrously bloomed the flower, a marvel for all to see, whether deathless gods or deathly men. From its root grew forth a hundred blossoms, and with its fragrant odor the wide heaven above and the whole earth laughed, and the salt wave of the sea. Then the maiden marveled, and stretched forth both her hands to seize the fair plaything, but the wide-wayed earth gaped in the Nysian plain, and up rushed the prince, the host of many guests, with his immortal horses* (6 ff.). In fine contrast with all this is the picture of the stricken and disfigured goddess, sitting in the shade of a thick olive tree, or wasting with silent grief in the house of Celeus.

Of the shorter *Hymns*, the seventh, which describes an adventure of Dionysus among pirates, preserves the legend of a miracle that was often represented in Greek art; the poem was imitated by Ovid.[1] The eighth, *To Ares*, is a poem of invocation of the Orphic type, a liturgy, out of place in a collection of 'Homeric' preludes. It is not likely that the individual *Hymns* escaped interpolation and expansion at the hands of Orphic poets and rhapsodes, but beyond the division of the *Hymn to Apollo*, the efforts of the destructive critics to disengage in each case the original hymn are unconvincing and have been discredited by the most recent editors.

The Hymn to Dionysus

The Hymn to Ares

The *Batrachomyomachia*, or *Battle of the Frogs and Mice*, is a burlesque epic of 316 verses which tradition first gave to Homer, later to Pigres of Halicarnassus (*circa* 480). It is interesting only as being the earliest parody of the Homeric epic, a kind of composition that hardly ranks as literature, though later, in Athens and Sicily, it appears to have

The Battle of the Frogs and Mice

[1] *Met.* III.

been popular. In style the *Battle* is a barbarous mixture of prose expressions and phrases borrowed from Homer; the humor, as in all these compositions, consists in applying elevated language to the doings of the insignificant, in converting eloquence to bombast.

The loss of the *Margites* leaves us with only a faint clew to Aristotle's meaning when he said (*Poetics* 4) that in his *Margites* Homer laid the foundations of Comedy. The poem was the epic of a stupid man (μάργος), a study of ineptitude. Margites is like a 'Character' from Theophrastus (371–287 B.C.) or the New Comedy. *Many things he had learned to do and all of them he did ill. Not of him could the gods make even a digger or a plowman or anything intelligent; he was a bungler at every trade.* As if to mark its satiric quality, the hexameters of the *Margites* were varied with iambics, the meter of satire. Like the *Battle*, it was ascribed by one tradition to Pigres of Halicarnassus. About half a dozen verses are extant.

The Margites

The seventeen 'Homeric' *Epigrams*, usually printed with the *Hymns*, have an antiquarian interest from the fact that the author of the 'Life' of Homer, wrongly ascribed to Herodotus, contrived to weave them into his account of the poet's adventures. They are of slight literary importance and were drawn from various sources. Composed for the most part as occasional poems by rhapsodes, they reflect the chances of a wandering and precarious life, appealing to the protection of sailors and cities on whose welcome the rhapsode must depend. The third *Epigram* was written for the tomb of Midas, probably by Cleobulus of Lindus, one of the Seven Sages. Its construction was criticised by Plato (*Phaedrus* 264) on the ground that its verses can be read in any order;[1] its arrogance inspired Simonides with a reflection on the folly of the sage who thought that a mere monument could defy decay and the hands of gods and men.

The Epigrams

[1] *A bronze maiden am I, set on the tomb of Midas. As long as water flows and tall trees grow Here fixed on this grave of many tears I tell the wayfarer Here lies Midas.* The epigram proved to be a monument that could outlast bronze — *aere perennius.*

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CHAPTER VI

ELEGY AND IAMBIC

As the music of the lyre was inseparable from epic recitation, so elegy was accompanied by the flute, the Phrygian rival of the lyre. The musical inventiveness of Asia Minor, the development of technical skill that fixed the Phrygian and Lydian modes, are summed up in the name of OLYMPUS, a legendary flute player whom tradition placed in the last quarter of the eighth century, in the reign of Midas II. Olympus is merely a class name, a personification of flute playing, as, in northern Greece, Orpheus stands for the music of the lyre. The legend in which Apollo, with his Dorian lyre, vanquished Marsyas, the Phrygian flute player, reflects the attitude of the Greeks to an instrument which they always regarded as Oriental, unbecoming to a Greek goddess, Athene, who, in another legend, casts it from her. But music was still indispensable to verse, and the double Phrygian flute with its many stops was well adapted to elegy, the new type of poetry which was to form a link between epic and lyric. The word itself, of uncertain derivation, may be Phrygian, meaning 'flute' or 'air on the flute,' but this explanation has as little authority as others that have been discarded by modern scholars. The elegiac distich is the first strophe of Greek poetry. The syncopation of the third and sixth feet of every alternate hexameter secures greater expressiveness to the dactylic meter, but elegiac is still far removed from the lyric form. The rigid mold of the couplet in which the thought ends with the pentameter was employed by the Latin poets. The earlier Greek elegists, however, such as Callinus and Tyrtaeus, were influenced by the continuous and fluent style of the epic, and show no preference for the closed couplet.

Olympus

Elegy

It was in Ionia, in the brilliant and disturbed Greek colonies of the seventh and sixth centuries, that elegy arose, and, wherever composed, at Megara, or Athens, or Sparta, elegiac verse was always composed in the Ionic dialect. Nevertheless, the influence of local dialects partially overcame this convention, so that we find Doric forms in the Ionic elegies of Tyrtaeus, who wrote for Dorians, and an Attic coloring in the poems of Solon, the Athenian. Greek elegy was essentially concerned with the present, with the varied interests of contemporary life. But epic, the poetry of the past, was its starting point and model, so that all the elegists, even those whose interest is chiefly gnomic, employed Homeric turns of phrase, Homeric rhythms in their hexameters, and Homeric fullness of detail. This is especially true of the political and martial elegies of Callinus and Tyrtaeus; Theognis of Megara, the typical gnomic poet, has frequent echoes of Hesiod with whom the elegists of Ionia had little in common. But, in all cases, the elegists carried the weight of epic lightly, and showed an increasing tendency to abandon the archaic and to give free scope to the poet's individuality.

The dialect of elegy

The earliest form of elegy was probably a lament,[1] so that the modern use of the word is a reversion to the early limited meaning to which Horace refers. Euripides, with conscious archaism, makes his Andromache bewail her misfortunes in elegiacs,[2] accompanied, no doubt, by the flute; but this is the only example in Greek literature of a formal dirge composed in the elegiac meter. For, by the time that Greek elegy began to be preserved as a literary form, its field had broadened to include a great variety of subjects, it addressed almost every kind of audience, and could express not only, as Horace indicates, both joy and grief, but the whole range of human experience and emotion. Callinus and Tyrtaeus wrote their war songs, and Solon delivered his political manifestoes, in the elegiac meter; it was equally

[1] Hor. *A. P.* 75. Versibus impariter junctis querimonia primum, Post etiam inclusa est voti sententia compos. Cp. Ovid, *Heroides* XV 7, elegeïe flebile carmen.

[2] *Androm.* 103 ff.

suited to a moral formula, a pathetic reflection, a satiric epigram, a prayer to the Muses (Solon *fr.* 13), or a flippant personal poem (Archilochus *fr.* 5). Finally, the elegiac couplet was much in use for poems composed to be sung at the banquet, at which the drinking song was a regular feature. Such songs could be satiric, or amorous, or serious and didactic. To sum up therefore in a single formula the rôle of Greek elegy, or to say that it was peculiarly appropriate to a special occasion, such as the banquet,[1] is to be unjust to its many-sidedness. Wherever, in the seventh and sixth centuries, Greeks met together (except at religious festivals, for which the hymn was more suitable), there was an opening for the recitation of elegiac verse, at the banquet, or round the camp fire, or in the Athenian market place. But with all its variety of interest, elegy displays certain marked features. It is preëminently speech, not narrative; the elegiac poet addresses his contemporaries, making a personal appeal, often with the effect of oratory; secondly, to judge from the considerable fragments that have reached us, the elegiac couplet, with its brevity and precision, was felt to be peculiarly fitted for the expression of an aphorism, a sententious formula that was to be remembered. Finally, elegy is subjective, and marks the reaction from the impersonal epic to introspective poetry, a signal of the creative impulse.

Chief characteristics of elegy

In the earliest elegiac poet sounds the note not of grief but of war. For CALLINUS of Ephesus (*floruit* 680 B.C.) war must have been the engrossing fact of life. He lived at the time when the fierce Cimmerians, whom only the Assyrians could check,[2] came down from the north and fell on the cities of Ionia. Ephesus, about this time, had a foe nearer home, the neighboring city of Magnesia, still unsacked, if we

Callinus

[1] Reitzenstein, *Epigramm und Skolion*, insists on the sympotic character of the elegy; Stickney, *Les Sentences dans la Poésie Grecque*, p. 116, defines it as "a sententious distich that one knows by heart."

[2] In 679 B.C. Assarhaddon, king of Assyria, defeated the Cimmerians and their leader Teuspa.

may believe Strabo, when Callinus wrote his martial elegiacs, though, a little later, Archilochus knew of its ruin. In the longest fragment, of twenty-one lines, Callinus exhorts the Ephesians to throw off their sloth and repel the invaders: *Dear and glorious it is for a man to fight for his country and his children, and the wife he has wedded, against his country's foes;* "And how can man die better?" *Though one stay at home the fate of death finds him out.*[1] The *pro patria mori* motive has inflamed every patriotic poet and orator from that day to this; it is the distinction of Callinus that he was the first lyric poet to strike that spirit-stirring note of which the finest lines in Horace are an echo.

Tyrtaeus

With TYRTAEUS (*circa* 640 B.C.)[2] the martial elegy has traveled from Ionia to Sparta, by way of Athens. He was, according to one legend, an Athenian from Aphidna, who left Athens to become a citizen of Lacedaemon, the most jealous and exclusive state in Greece. Tyrtaeus made the war songs of his adopted country. The fables that cluster about his personality are the attempts of later writers to fill in the meager outline of fact; unless, indeed, they are due to the natural desire of the Athenians to lessen the glory of Sparta. Not till Pausanias, at any rate (170 A.D.), does one meet the tradition that Tyrtaeus was no Spartan but a lame schoolmaster whom the Athenians had sent in derision when Sparta, obeying an oracle, humbled her pride and asked a general from Athens. The Second Messenian War was a crisis in the history of Sparta. For the second time, Messenia, the Poland of Greece, rose against her oppressors. In the prolonged struggle that followed, the popular discontent in Sparta threatened the ruling dynasty, the great Dorian house of the Heracleidae.

[1] *fr.* 3.

[2] Since 1896, when Dr. Verrall opened the debate (in the *Classical Review* X), the evidence for the date of Tyrtaeus has been revised. Dr. Verrall argued for the middle of the fifth century, while others connect the poet with the Messenian revolt in the latter part of the sixth. In the absence of conclusive proof it seems well to adhere to the tradition which makes Tyrtaeus a leading figure in the 'Second Messenian War' of the seventh century.

It was at this point that Tyrtaeus, the alien poet, averted a revolution and saved the state. His poem on *The Blessings of Order* is a royalist manifesto urging the divine right of the Heracleidae, recalling the triumphs of their house in the earlier and longer war with Messenia, quoting the oracle of Apollo which, in set terms, supported the Dorian dynasty. He caught the Spartan accent when he made this appeal to the Spartan passion for discipline. But it was in his *Exhortations* and *Marching Songs* that he touched the whole nation. The tradition that makes Tyrtaeus lead the armies of Sparta to victory is perhaps only a way of saying that the spirit of Sparta leaped to answer his songs. Fighting for its own sake was rarely courted by the Greeks; it is therefore not surprising to find Tyrtaeus framing his *Exhortations* as an argument. In addressing a Greek one must not forget that he calculates first; his very valor must be deliberate. It was not enough to inflame the Spartans by the reminder of their old successes; they must be convinced of the expediency of death in battle. *A fair thing it is to fall and die in the front rank, a brave man fighting for one's native land: but to leave his own city and his fruitful fields, to go forth a beggar, that is of all things the most hateful: . . . nay, since for the outcast wanderer there is no fair season, no reverence, no regard, no pity, let us fight for this country of ours and die for our children, and never grudge them our lives* (*fr.* 8). In the longest fragment, of forty lines, is a passage which Theognis echoed or rather parodied,[1] since for military glory he substituted wealth: *What though a man should have the stature and strength of a Cyclops, or outrun the North Wind of Thrace; what though he were fairer than Tithonus in his beauty, richer than Midas or Cinyras, more royal than Pelops, son of Tantalus, or had the honey-sweet speech of Adrastus; what is all glory beside the glory of valor in war? This is the excellent thing, this is the great prize among men, the fairest that youth can win* (*fr.* 10).

The Blessings of Order

The Exhortations

[1] Cp. Theognis 699 ff. with Tyrtaeus *fr.* 10.

Tyrtaeus wrote his political and martial elegies in Ionic, the dialect of the elegy, shaded here and there by the Doric of Sparta.[1] His phrases constantly recall the Ionic epic; his appeal to the pride of the youth of Sparta not to leave the brunt of battle to the old was, no doubt, the more effective from the fact that the contrast of the glory of youth and the humiliation of age was borrowed from the famous speech of Priam in the *Iliad*.[2]

Dialect

For at least three centuries, the *Exhortations* of Tyrtaeus were learned and recited by Spartan soldiers; meanwhile they became the common property of all Greece. In the fourth century one could assume that a Cretan knew his Tyrtaeus like any Spartan.[3] We owe a fragment of thirty-two lines to the fact that, after the battle of Chaeronea (338 B.C.), when he had to indict a coward, Lycurgus,[4] the Attic orator, quoted Tyrtaeus' picture of a coward's fate among the Lacedaemonians. Tyrtaean poetry, to use Goethe's distinction, is the antithesis of the poetry of the discouraged.

In his *Marching Songs*, to be sung to the flute by Dorians, Tyrtaeus used the Doric dialect. The rhythm is that proper to a march, anapaestic, without dactyls. In the solitary extant fragment of six lines, the immortal *Marseillaise* of Greece, he appeals to a spirit that no argument could reach: *Come, sons of Sparta, mother of heroes, come, sons of Sparta's men; forward with your shield on the left; be brave and cast your spear; take no thought for your life; that is not the way of Sparta* (*fr.* 15).

Far from Sparta and the loud, bold strains of Tyrtaeus, MIMNERMUS of Colophon (*circa* 630 B.C.) expressed in the same meter his profound discouragement with life. He is the founder of the erotic elegy; from Mimnermus the elegiac poets of Alexandria, and later, their imitators, the Roman

Mimnermus

[1] *E.g.* μάλιον for μᾶλλον and the shortening of the accusative plural ending of the first declension.

[2] Cp. Tyrt. 10. 21–28 with *Il.* XXII 69 ff. Leaf thinks that the Homeric passage is an interpolated echo of Tyrtaeus.

[3] Plato, *Laws* 629.

[4] *Against Leocrates* 107.

elegists, drew their inspiration. This poet of personal emotion was haunted by the terror of old age: *We are like the leaves that grow in the season of spring flowers, when on a sudden they increase in the sun's rays. Like them we rejoice for a moment in the flowers of youth, not knowing what the gods have in store, good or ill. But the black Fates are there, bringing for one man the doom of grievous old age, for another the doom of death* (*fr.* 2). Many poets since Mimnermus have bewailed the brevity of youth, but nearly always they have insisted on a sensitiveness all the keener since the charm is fleeting. If love and youth must "vanish with the rose," Horace sees in that fact no motive for a strain of lamentation.[1] But Mimnermus was no Epicurean; his eyes are fixed on the inevitable moment when beauty must perish, and his bitterness is unrelieved. The collection of his elegies was called *Nanno* after a flute player whom Mimnermus loved, but her name does not appear in any fragment. His date is indicated by the legend that Solon met him in Asia (*circa* 593 B.C.). In his verses to Mimnermus, Solon addresses him as 'son of Liguastes,'[2] and, replying to a couplet in which the Ionian poet had prayed not to live beyond his sixtieth year, begs him to allow twenty years more to life, to admit that a man might be happy till eighty.[3] Sixty years seemed too short to Solon who 'lived and learned,' but they were enough for one whose only aim had been enjoyment. Mimnermus reflects the decadence of the Greek colonies. It was not long after her poet took this enervated view of life that Ionia began to lose her freedom.

[1] *Odes* I. 11. 6. The address of the Celtic poet Llywarch Hen to his crutch is the nearest parallel with Mimnermus; but the wistful melancholy of the Greek poet pales before the passionate fierceness of the Celt: *O my crutch! Is it not spring, when the cuckoo passes through the air, when the foam sparkles on the sea? The young maidens no longer love me! Behold old age, which makes sport of me, from the hair of my head to my teeth, to my eyes which women loved.*

[2] Diels is followed by Wilamowitz in regarding the word as an epithet meaning 'the clear-voiced singer,' rather than as a patronymic.

[3] Cp. Solon *fr.* 20 with Mimnermus *fr.* 6.

With Solon, son of Execestides (639–559 B.C.), Athens makes her first contribution to the literature of Greece. He was an impoverished aristocrat of the house of Codrus, who, according to the tradition, repaired his fortunes by trade with Ionia before he set about founding the Athenian democracy. His chief social reform was to free the small holdings of Attica from the mortgages and debts that enslaved the middle and lower classes to the capitalists and landowners. *The black earth be my witness*, says Solon in one of his iambic fragments, *for she was a slave and is free* (*fr.* 36). Athens had a genius for relating herself and her heroes to the striking events of the past. Solon owes much of his dramatic interest to the tale told by Herodotus of the encounter of the Athenian lawgiver with Croesus when he came to Sardis, like other wise men, and uttered the unheeded warning that, later, was to save the life of the Lydian king.[1] The date of Croesus falls too late for that meeting to be anything but a picturesque fable. It was the Athenian way of accounting for the fact that Croesus survived the fall of Sardis (546 B.C.).

Solon

Of Solon's poetry about 250 verses survive. They are, for the most part, the expression of his political life or an apology for it, an answer to his critics. A political argument does not lend itself to imaginative treatment, and Solon was rather a politician writing verse than a poet. But the verse is good, and in more than one passage, the imagery is vigorous. In the *Exhortation to the Athenians*, after describing the evils of the political system which he overthrew, he continues: *So the curse that is on the whole state follows every man to his own home; no more can the doors of his courtyard keep it out; but over the high fence it leaps and hunts him down, yea though he hide himself in the innermost room within* (*fr.* 4). In another passage the swift vengeance of Zeus sweeps down on the wrongdoer *like the spring wind that on a sud-*

[1] Herod. I 29. The earlier version of the escape of Croesus, in the *Third Ode* of Bacchylides, was perhaps inspired from Delphi; there is no mention of Solon; Apollo saves Croesus who had given great gifts to his shrine.

den scatters the clouds. It stirs up the floor of the barren and restless sea and on the wheat-bearing earth lays waste the fair works of men's hands. Then it blows as high as the steep home of the gods, the very vault of heaven, and makes all clear weather for the eyes to see. And the force of the sun in his strength and beauty shines over the rich earth and never a cloud is there to be seen (*fr.* 13). Solon's elegies were not all political and sententious. When the Athenians had set their house in order they had yet to retrieve a disgrace abroad. They must recover Salamis from Megara, and never let it be said that, in full sight of Athens, the island that closed the bay of their own Eleusis was held by a rival state. Like Tyrtaeus urging the Spartans to reconquer Messenia, Solon recited his *Salamis* to inflame the pride and patriotism of Athens. Only eight disconnected lines are extant: *I come as a herald from lovely Salamis, with a song on my lips instead of common speech. . . . On that day may I change my country and be a citizen of Pholegandrus or of Sicinus but not of Athens; for the moment I appear men will say: It is an Athenian, one of those who let Salamis go. . . . Forward to Salamis! Let us fight for the lovely island and wipe out our shame and disgrace* (*fr.* 1). Solon's iambic trimeters and trochaic tetrameters, as far as they survive, are political and are prose in all but their form. The contention of Plato[1] that Solon needed only leisure to rival Homer and Hesiod is a dramatic exaggeration of the pride of the Athenians in their great lawgiver, who was, moreover, their first poet.

The Salamis

Of all forms of verse the elegiac couplet was the best suited to contain a moral reflection that was to be learned by heart, or the brief appeal that, on a monument, was to rivet the attention of the wayfarer. With PHOCYLIDES of Miletus (*circa* 540 B.C.) it is for the first time pungent and aggressive, is in fact an epigram in the later sense since it expresses a paradox or surprises by its conclusion. Of the personality of Phocylides we know nothing. His gnomic reflections, to judge

Phocylides

[1] *Timaeus* 21.

from the fragments, were written chiefly in hexameters; one of eight lines in which he compares four types of women with animals of corresponding qualities is perhaps abridged from the satire on women by Semonides of Amorgos. The stereotyped phrase, *This too is by Phocylides,* that introduces many of his verses marked them as his own in a day when a gnomic utterance was likely either to become common property or to be absorbed into a collection such as that which is labeled Theognis.

Opposite Miletus lay the little island of Leros, and on Leros lived DEMODOCUS, a rival epigrammatist. *The people of Miletus are not fools, but they act like fools,* wrote Demodocus. The epigram of Phocylides on Leros is more famous: *This too is by Phocylides: The people of Leros are bad; not this man bad and that man good; all are bad except Procles; and even Procles is from Leros.* Of the two epigrams it is not clear which was the attack, which the rejoinder, and it matters little. The Milesian poet, in whose fragments are no echoes of war or politics, ranked as one of the wise men of Greece. His popularity lasted long if one may judge from the fact that, after 200 B.C., a learned Jew, writing for Greeks, thought it worth while to attach the name of Phocylides to a moral poem of some 200 verses, the *Pseudo-Phocylidea,* in which he attempted a partial reconciliation of Paganism and the Bible.

Pseudo-Phocylidea

XENOPHANES of Colophon (*circa* 540 B.C.) was a philosopher who wrote verse. But he composed elegiacs also, of which a few fairly long fragments survive. The longest, of twenty-four lines (*fr.* 1), is a good example of descriptive elegy; the formal setting of a banquet, the goblets and garlands, the clear cold water and incense, are enumerated with Homeric precision. The closing verses take a didactic turn. Xenophanes, consistently hostile to the popular myth, and with the Greek dislike of quarreling at a banquet, forbids his hearers to recite the mythical and exciting quarrels of the Titans, Giants, and Centaurs. He has been called the first Protestant, since he was the first Greek to attack the traditional mythology of the

Xenophanes

poets, and he anticipated Euripides by expressing resentment at the excessive honor paid by the Greeks to the heroes of athletic contests, 'as though muscle were more useful to a city than my philosophy,' he says, with naïve self-advertisement. The people of Colophon, the home of the self-indulgent Mimnermus, had learned luxury from the Lydians. Even Mimnermus, in his fragment on a dead warrior (*fr.* 14), seems to regret the effeminization of Colophon, the degeneracy of the old stock from Pylos that had been weakened by contact with the luxury of Asia. The fragment (3) in which Xenophanes describes with the disdain of a philosopher their carefully dressed hair, their perfumes and purple, is perhaps derived from an elegiac poem on the *Founding of Colophon*, ascribed to him by tradition. Of his satires and parodies of philosophers, including Homer, we have only half a dozen hexameters. Xenophanes wrote Ionic, avoiding, however, that imitation of Homer which is a marked feature of the martial elegy of Callinus and Tyrtaeus.

The gnome, or general reflection, of which the Latin equivalent is *sententia*, is one of the most marked features of Greek poetry, nearly always profoundly moral. But there are the widest differences in its use and application. In the trivial conversations of the *bourgeois* class in the *Mimes* of Herodas, or the *Fifteenth Idyl* of Theocritus, the condensed philosophy of current proverbs plays much the same part as in the *Polite Conversations* of Swift, whose fine ladies bandy vulgar saws and sayings from sheer poverty of thought. But if one should turn to Greek literature for a more dignified expression of gnomic wisdom, the Hellenic counterpart of the Hebrew *Book of Proverbs*, the gnomic elegiacs of THEOGNIS of Megara would furnish the nearest parallel. He is the typical Greek representative of the sententious style, of which Hesiod's more rudimentary moral rhetoric is the earliest example. There is no reasonable doubt that Nisaean Megara, the hostile neighbor of Athens, was his birthplace. But in the course of his wanderings he visited Sicily,[1] and probably

Theognis

[1] Plato, *Laws* 630 A.

became a citizen of Sicilian Megara, the colony, so that some commentators, ancient and modern, have denied that he was a native of the mother city. His date is a matter for conjecture. The late chronologists, such as Eusebius and Suidas, placed his *floruit* about the middle of the sixth century. For them, as for ourselves, the question hung on the interpretation of two passages in which Theognis speaks of the Persian peril. He invites his friends to *drink and be merry and never fear the war of the Medes* (763–764), and, a little later, prays to Dorian Apollo to intervene and save from the wanton host of the Medes Dorian Megara, the city of Alcathous, whose walls the god had helped to build. What Persian invasion was this that threatened Megara? Surely not the conquest of the Ionian Greeks by Harpagus (546 B.C.), which could have little significance for the city of Theognis; the reference is rather to the danger from Darius in 491 B.C., or to the last invasion of 480–479 when not even the victory of the Greeks at Salamis saved the Megarid from being overrun by the cavalry of Mardonius. The tendency of modern scholarship is to follow this line of reasoning and to assign the life of Theognis to the latter half of the sixth and at least the first decade of the fifth century.

Date

Theognis is the only Greek elegiac poet of whom we have an independent manuscript; for the others, as for the writers of iambic verse, we depend on the caprices of quotation. There are extant nearly 1400 verses that pass under his name; there is no direct evidence to show at what date our collection was made. It is divided into two books, the first containing some 1200 verses, and including all of the extant gnomic poetry of Theognis that is worth consideration; the *Second Book* is a collection of erotic poems which occurs in only one manuscript and is, by almost universal consent, rejected as spurious. Not until the tenth century A.D. and then only in that manuscript is it identified with Theognis.

Of the home politics of sixth-century Megara we know hardly more than can be gathered from the vague allusions of Theognis. The expulsion of the tyrant Theagenes marked the rise of the

democracy and a revolution that meant exile for the aristocratic poet and his party, which probably returned to power through a counter-revolution. Theognis, at any rate, was a part of all these dissensions. His poems reflect the arrogance of the aristocrat, for whom men were good or bad according to their social rank or their politics, and the regrets of the conservative who regarded the increasing power of the common people as a sign of the degeneracy of Megara.

Megara

Unchanged the walls, but, ah, how changed the folk!
The base, who knew erstwhile nor law nor right,
But dwelled like deer, with goatskin for a cloak,
Are now ennobled; and, O sorry plight!
The nobles are made base in all men's sight (53 ff.).[1]

Theognis the politician was a partisan embittered by exile, a Greek Coriolanus in his view of the common people. In his didactic verses 'No excess' is his text. But turn the page and you will find him demanding the 'black blood' of his enemies to drink, the genuine note of the Theognis who practiced, when he dropped for the moment the Theognis who preached. Apart from their political interest, his poems are, as Xenophon[2] said, a human document (*σύγγραμμα περὶ ἀνθρώπων*), a revelation of Greek morals, their inconsistency, their narrowness, their expediency. No wonder that Plato disparaged the popular morality of Greece, while Socrates devoted his life to laying the foundations of a moral philosophy the absence of which was the most striking deficiency of the Athenians in his day; what he had to supplant was the prudential ethics of the favorite moralists of Greece, Hesiod and Theognis, the self-centered and pessimistic.

Theognis is not a great poet. The pessimism which he shares with Hesiod and other makers of maxims becomes monotonous, partly because it is so personal: *Other men perhaps will be. But I shall be dead and turned to black earth.* He is deficient in

[1] Professor J. B. Bury.
[2] Xen. (?) *apud Stobaeum* (*Florilegium* lxxxviii 14).

imagery. But there are passages in which he rises above himself, as when he addresses Cyrnus with the famous promise of immortality: *I have given thee wings, and thou shalt mount with ease and fly over the unmeasured sea and the whole earth. When men meet to feast and to drink thou shalt be there, a story on the lips of many. . . . Yea, when thou shalt go down into the depths and darkness of the earth, to the sorrowful home of Hades, even in death thou shalt not lose thy renown . . . the gracious gifts of the violet-crowned Muses shall be thy escort; for thou shalt be a song sung by all to whom those gifts are dear, so long as the earth lasts and the sun. Yet from thee I win no honor, nay, none; thy words deceive me as though I were a little child* (237 ff.).

Cyrnus

The unexpected bitterness of the ending converts the poem into an epigram. It was to Cyrnus, son of Polypaus, whom he sometimes addresses as Polypaides, that Theognis dedicated his elegies. About 300 verses are stamped with the name of this young Dorian noble who was his closest friend; the poet's prophecy to Cyrnus that his name would serve as a 'seal' of genuineness,[1] would establish a sort of copyright (19 ff.), has been justified, since one of the few points on which the editors of Theognis are agreed is in accepting as his the verses that include that name. From these alone we might reconstruct the grumbling Dorian aristocrat, a better bred and more worldly Hesiod, who cannot please his fellow-citizens, who laments the disloyalties of his friends, his poverty, the decadence of his class. In exile he hears with a pang the shrill cry of the crane, the signal for the spring plowing on the estate that is no longer his.[2]

In the mass of short poems and couplets that have reached us

[1] By such a seal (σφραγίς) the blind poet of the *Delian Hymn* endeavored to assure his fame; in the *Persae* of Timotheus, as Wilamowitz points out, the personal allusion is meant to serve as a seal. But the best instance is the poetry of Phocylides and Demodocus, where each couplet was stamped by its author.

[2] Cp. *Bid sow, when the crane starts clanging for Afric, in shrill-voiced emigrant number.* — Swinburne's translation of Aristophanes, *Birds* 710.

under the name of Theognis, are many repetitions, and, what is more curious, variations, as though the compiler of the collection had included not only the current version but the current imitation as well, or even the parody. Finally, several passages occur which are borrowed from Tyrtaeus, Solon, and Mimnermus, with changes of setting, of application, and of language that illustrate the precarious copyright of the Greek author of gnomic elegy, whose maxims must always run the risk of alteration and absorption into such a collection as this. The motive which led our compiler to gather under the name of Theognis an anthology of the sententious elegy which includes even the famous Delian inscription[1] that Aristotle saw on the temple of Apollo, is still debated. For a school book they were highly unsuitable. It is more likely that the collection is a tribute to the popularity of Theognis at those banquets which were to keep alive the memory of Cyrnus, where love and politics, satire and the sententious couplet, were all appropriate. The character and the similarity of the introductory words and the recurring couplets favor the view that we have here a book of drinking songs, collected probably about the beginning of the fifth century B.C., when the sympotic elegy was in vogue.[2]

The repetitions

ARCHILOCHUS of Paros (650 B.C.) was a younger contemporary of Callinus. His date is fixed with some precision by the eclipse of the sun in 648 B.C. which he mentions (*fr.* 74); it is the first trustworthy date of historical Greece.[3] The reign of Gyges, the first barbarian to impress the Ionian Greeks with his greatness, and the destruction, by the Cimmerians, of Magnesia, the outpost of Hellenism, fell within the life of Archilochus, who made the wealth of the one and the woes of the other proverbial.

Archilochus

[1] *Fairest is justice, health is best; but sweetest of all is to win the heart's desire*, 255–256.

[2] So Reitzenstein, *Epigramm und Skolion*. The theory of Müller (1877), that the arrangement of our text depends on a system of responsion indicated by catchwords, is rightly rejected by recent critics as over-ingenious.

[3] Hauvette points out that the eclipse may have been that of April, 657.

Archilochus was ranked with Homer as standing for the perfection of a type; if we put Homer out of the question, he holds the first place among the poets of Ionia. To invent, in Greek tradition, often means no more than to introduce to literature or to improve; Archilochus was credited with the invention of iambic, because, with him, the iambic trimeter became a perfected literary form. Of his poems we have as many elegiac as iambic fragments, a number of trochaic tetrameters and parts of epodes. The elegiacs often indicate that they were written to be sung at a banquet (*frr.* 1, 2, 9, 13).[1]

Strongly personal throughout, Archilochus is the first poet of Greece who expresses himself, his individual desires and wrongs and sorrows. His father was a noble, his mother a slave; a man so born, and born to poverty, must have many humiliations to encounter. Archilochus was forever "in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes." But though his poems show him swayed by all the passions, the passion that ruled him was pride, and he met the blows of fate with defiance. The narrow limits of Paros could not hold him. *All the misery of all the Greeks met together at Thasos* (*fr.* 52), an island off the coast of Thrace. There, too, went Archilochus with a colony from Paros. But the attempt failed. It was in an encounter with the hostile Thracians that he threw away his shield, and so set the fashion for poets of wearing their armor lightly, an example that was followed by Alcaeus (*fr.* 32), by Anacreon (*fr.* 28), and by Horace at Philippi (*Odes* 2. 7). The Spartans, we are told, drove Archilochus out of Sparta because they could not tolerate the truly Ionian levity of his verses on this incident: —

Some Thracian struteth with my shield,
For, being somewhat flurried,
I left it in a wayside bush,
When from the field I hurried;

[1] New fragments on two papyri were found at Strassburg in 1899. See bibliography and Blass in *Rhein. Mus.* 55, who attributes them to Hipponax.

A right good targe, but I got off,
The deuce may take the shield;
I'll get another just as good
When next I go afield.[1]

The arrows of fortune Archilochus met with fatalism; the insults of men he hastened to pay back. Without the context it is not easy to decide whether the fragments that refer to Neobule are derived from the satire that followed his disillusion, but, in any case, the expression of passionate love meets us first in Archilochus: *O that I might but touch the hand of Neobule!* he cries (*fr.* 71); and again, *The love and longing that filled my heart poured a thick mist before my eyes and stole my delicate senses* (*fr.* 103). Rejected by Lycambes, the father of Neobule, Archilochus attacked the whole family with the vitriol of his tongue. According to the tradition, father and daughters hanged themselves rather than face his iambics, and Archilochus won the name of 'slanderer' which, two hundred years later, Pindar echoes (*Pyth.* 2. 55).

Neobule

Invective was perhaps the readiest expression of his intense and stormy spirit. His satire was narrow and personal, not social, though Horace (*Sat.* 2. 3. 12) brackets him with the poets of the Old Comedy. The didactic tone is rarely met in the fragments, nor do they, like the elegiacs of Theognis, reflect the disturbed politics of the Ionia of his day. Archilochus could express sorrow as well as scorn and hate, and the elegiacs (*fr.* 9) on his brother-in-law who was drowned at sea are hardly inferior to the more celebrated lament of Catullus. *The measureless renown of Archilochus traveled west and east,* says an epigram of Theocritus (19). He fell in battle against Naxos, and there is a legend that Apollo himself refused to admit to his temple the man who had slain the 'servant of the Muses.' The brevity and brilliance, the power which Quintilian[2] calls the 'blood and muscle' of his verses, give vitality to almost every fragment of Archilochus. What im-

[1] Professor Paul Shorey.

[2] *Inst. Or.* 10. 1. 60.

pressed Longinus[1] was the 'rich and disorderly abundance' of his many-sided genius. He wrote hymns, as was natural for one whose father belonged to a priestly caste of Paros, where was a special cult of Demeter; his famous song of victory, a sort of prototype of our *See the Conquering Hero Comes*, or *Hail to the Chief*, was sung in Pindar's day on occasions when no special ode was composed for the procession.

The beast fable was now well established in Greek literature in its direct form as in Hesiod, or, with Solon, as a metaphorical allusion (*fr.* 11), the form in which it chiefly appears in modern literature, or condensed to a proverb. Archilochus was famous for his beast fables, which are mentioned as late as the Emperor Julian (361 A.D.). What connects him with comedy and makes him in a sense its founder is the fact that he forsook the epic manner and uttered the language of daily life.

Meters

His chief metrical innovation was the introduction of the strophe of the epode. Horace, in his first ten epodes, uses one of the two types of epode that survive in the fragments of Archilochus, that in which the iambic dimeter follows the trimeter.

Semonides

SEMONIDES (*circa* 625 B.C.) was a native of Samos who led a colony to Amorgos and there lived and wrote. He was a younger contemporary of Archilochus, but his iambics show no trace of the influence of his neighbor of Paros. Archilochus, with his personal invective, is hardly to be called a satirist; Semonides, at any rate in the extant fragments, directs his satire against a class. The pessimism of Hesiod, the Hesiodic contempt of women, are echoed in the longest fragment (of 118 verses), preserved by Stobaeus. For Semonides, as for Hesiod, woman is a necessary evil. In his catalogue, which Phocylides imitated (*fr.* 1), to nine out of ten women, classified according to their perverse instincts, are assigned the undesirable characteristics of as many animals. The telltale woman is like a dog, restless and curious, eager to retail gossip. *Not even*

[1] *Treatise on the Sublime* 33.

with threats can her husband stop her, though in his anger he should knock her teeth out with a stone, not though he should speak to her gently, even when she is sitting among her guests. The pig, the ass, the weasel, the horse, the ape, all have their counterpart among women, slovenly, extravagant, bad-tempered, changeable, and dangerous as the sea. Last of all he describes the woman who resembles a bee, Hesiod's ideal housewife of the middle class; she takes no part in the scandalous talk of her neighbors; to her alone clings divine grace; her children are fair and of good report. But she is exceptional, and Semonides ends as he began. Woman is the most baleful gift of Zeus, the great dilemma since one can neither live with her nor without her (*fr.* 7). In another fragment of twenty verses he uses the iambic meter for didactic reflections on the uncertainties of life, the helplessness of men, the need of moderation and a resigned attitude to the inevitable. In the shorter fragments there are traces of the beast fable, dear to all didactic poets. Semonides is credited by tradition with a lost elegiac poem on the *Ancient History of Samos*, his birthplace. He wrote Ionic, colored, as we can detect, by the local dialect of Amorgos.[1] The Alexandrians placed him next to Archilochus in their limited canon of iambic poets.

Hipponax

Hipponax (*circa* 540 B.C.) was expelled from Ephesus, his native city, by the tyrants Athenagoras and Comas whom he probably antagonized by his scurrilous verses. He settled no further from Ephesus than Clazomenae. The bitterness of a life darkened by poverty, by exile, by personal deformity, is reflected in all the fragments of Hipponax. Archilochus, reckless and unfortunate, had stooped to be scurrilous; Hipponax is at home in the gutter where he shivers and curses. Bupalos the sculptor caricatured his personal defects and was punished by a satire that made him a proverb to be quoted with the faithless Lycambes.[2] Even his parents, says a poet of the *Anthology*, were

[1] Fick, *Neue Jahrb.* I p. 505.

[2] Hor. *Epod.* 6. 12. Qualis Lycambae spretus infido gener aut acer hostis Bupalo.

not safe from the slander of Hipponax; his shafts could wound beyond the grave.[1] Theocritus, three centuries later, wrote his epitaph in choliambics and made the single attempt to defend his memory, asserting that only the wicked need hesitate to approach his grave.

The fragments of Hipponax justify his bad name. He is the earliest type of the begging poet whom it is dangerous to disoblige. Like Martial, he demands clothes and money: *Give Hipponax a cloak and a tunic and fur-lined shoes and gold.* The whine of the beggar is varied by invective. Hipponax summed up with caustic brevity the satire of the woman haters, Semonides and Phocylides: *There are two days on which a woman gives a man most pleasure — the day he marries her and the day he buries her* (*fr.* 29). This couplet is written in the choliambic meter, the skazon, in which the iambic trimeter changes its character by the regular use of a spondee (or trochee, — ∪) in the last foot. This limping rhythm, the invention of the limping Hipponax, was well suited to invective, but its rôle in satire was short-lived; Ananius, a younger and insignificant contemporary of Hipponax, wrote his satire in choliambics. But it was not long before Comedy claimed the field of satire, and, with the Alexandrians, such as Callimachus, or later with Babrius, the Latin writer of Greek fables, the skazon lost its satiric character. In the mimes of the Dorian writer Herodas, a contemporary of Theocritus, it is employed for dialogue. Hipponax wrote trochaic tetrameters and hexameters, but the greater number of the extant fragments are choliambic. Like Archilochus and Semonides, he follows the tendency which we first met in Hesiod to point his moral by the use of the beast fable, or at least by allusions to assume a knowledge of the deeply rooted folklore of Greece. He makes the first reference in Greek literature to the scapegoat (φαρμακός).

The skazon

[1] Cp. *Anth. Pal.* 7. 536: 'These are not grapes but brambleberries, the prickly pear that chokes the traveler and puckers his mouth.'

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Theognis

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CHAPTER VII

MELIC POETRY

THE semi-mythical figure of Olympus represented the development of the music of the Asiatic flute, and so played a part in the history of Greek elegy. The more definite personality of TERPANDER of Lesbos (*circa* 676 B.C.) marks the advance of the Aeolic music of the cithara, the instrument of melic poetry. The history of the Greek cithara is a series of legends of the gradual increase of the strings of the primitive four-stringed instrument. *Terpander*, says Timotheus (*Persae* 237), *yoked the muse to ten strings*. But tradition credited him with the addition of only three strings to the original four, and his name is forever connected with the seven-stringed cithara which was in vogue in the fifth century B.C. Like Tyrtaeus and Alcman, he was one of those poets of alien birth whom Sparta, according to tradition, summoned from abroad to help her to regulate the dissensions of her citizens. For two centuries Terpander's music held the field, not only at Sparta and Lesbos, but throughout Greece; to sing his nomes was the privilege of free Spartans, denied to the helots;[1] to be a disciple of Terpander was to have precedence over other competitors at the Spartan festival of the Carneia, so that 'to come next to the Lesbian' became a proverb. About the middle of the fifth century, Phrynis of Lesbos, the next innovator, shocked the conservatism of Athens as well as of Sparta with his more intricate and florid music.[2] Finally, Timotheus of Miletus (*circa* 400 B.C.) boasts of his eleven strings (*Persae* 242). Terpander added three to the four divisions of the nome, the austere religious lyric with which he is closely

Terpander

[1] Plutarch, *Lycurgus* 28. [2] Aristoph. *Clouds* 971.

identified. He is said to have invented the Dorian mode, and we have four stately verses written in pure spondees which Clement of Alexandria quoted as his (*fr.* 1). Like *fr.* 2, it is apparently part of a prelude, for Terpander stands for the type of prelude that was sung to the cithara, as Homer's name was attached to the epic preludes that were recited by the rhapsodes.

Though Greek melic poetry is not to be thought of apart from music, the musical accompaniment was only what Plutarch calls it, the 'seasoning' of the words.[1] The enchantment that Orpheus used on the Argonauts, or Phemius on the suitors, was mainly an enchantment of language. We may, therefore, console ourselves for our ignorance of Greek music with the reflection that, as far as our fragments of melic go, we possess the essential, the statue, as it were, though without the coloring that was an added beauty to the Greeks.

Ionia had been the starting point of Greek epic, elegy and iambic. Melic is Aeolian and Dorian. The Greeks had a passion for establishing a succession of names (διαδοχή) in every branch of art. The legend that makes the head of Orpheus float

"Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore"

symbolizes in the Greek manner the passing of Aeolic poetry from its original home in northern Greece to Aeolic Lesbos. That island produced two poets, Alcaeus and Sappho, whose purely personal and emotional poems so dominate the scanty remaining fragments of that type of Greek lyric, that the type itself has come to be regarded as Aeolic, as opposed to the less subjective choral lyric of the Dorians. The distinction is not to be pressed. Alcman, the Dorian, wrote subjective poetry for his choruses of maidens, while the Aeolians, for all their subjectivity, did not neglect the choral type that expresses the spirit of a crowd. But for the Dorians, especially at Sparta, music and poetry were not so much a recreation as a discipline. The self-restrained Spartan temper was hostile to individualism and sought its highest

[1] *Symp.* 7. 8.

expression in an art that reflected the corporate life. For the poetry of passion we must turn to the Aeolians.

Alcaeus

Alcaeus of Lesbos (612 B.C.) belonged to a noble family of Mitylene. That city, like Megara a century later, was divided, toward the close of the seventh century, by the revolutions that regularly attended the rise of democracy in the Greek cities. To this democratic advance Alcaeus, like Theognis, opposed all the prejudices and jealousies of his caste. But his bitterest hostility was directed against those leaders of the masses who, one after another, as Mitylene vibrated between oligarchy and democracy, seized the supreme power and became tyrants. Melanchrus, one of the first of these, was murdered in a counter-revolution in which Antimenidas, the brother of the poet, was prominent; Myrsilus fell in his turn, the occasion for an expression of savage joy from Alcaeus: *Now all must drink, whether they will or no; for Myrsilus is dead* (*fr.* 20). Horace borrowed the first line of this poem for the ode in which he exulted over the fall of Antony and Cleopatra (1. 37). Alcaeus fought with his sword no less than with his verses. When Mitylene went to war with Athens for the possession of Sigeum at the entrance of the Hellespont, he took the field, and, like Archilochus, Anacreon, and Horace, threw away his shield in flight, writing home to his friend Melanippus that the Athenians had hung it in the temple of Athene at Sigeum.[1] A more distinguished part in this encounter with Athens was played by Pittacus of Mitylene, reckoned later among the Seven Sages. He won the title by his wise policy during the ten years (590–580 B.C.) of his dictatorship in Mitylene. But Alcaeus, always in the opposition, a partisan rather than a patriot, and perhaps sincerely afraid that the *low-born Pittacus* was aiming at the tyranny (*fr.* 37) could not reconcile himself to the friend of democracy. For ten or fifteen years he wandered in exile, visiting Thrace and Egypt, suffering the *dura navis dura fugae mala* (Hor. 2. 13), *the miseries of shipwreck, the bitter hardships of exile*, and expressing his sorrows in songs which Horace

[1] Herod. V 95.

thought must charm even the "tortured ghosts" in the underworld. Alcaeus probably returned to Mitylene when Pittacus laid down the dictatorship (580 B.C.) and granted an amnesty to the exiled aristocrats.

His poems were arranged by the Alexandrians in ten books. The *Songs of Revolution* (*Stasiotica*), like the songs of love and wine, were, no doubt, sympotic, intended to be sung at the table. In a short poem of seven verses, apparently complete, he describes his armory, the decorative effect on roof and walls and floor of the burnished arms, the white crests, the strange foreign weapons. His delight in their brilliance and profusion is aesthetic rather than martial, and only in the last line does he remind himself that all these fascinating objects have their use for 'the work in hand,' probably one of those counter-revolutions which put down the tyrants. An Alcaic fragment (18), in which, like Theognis (671 ff.), he compares the state in distress to a ship laboring in a storm, was imitated by Horace (1. 14). His brother, Antimenidas, more enterprising than Alcaeus, spent part of his exile in the service of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, fighting as a Greek mercenary in Egypt. We have a few lines of the poem with which Alcaeus welcomed him home from exile, *from the ends of the earth, bringing a sword handle of ivory inlaid with gold*, as a trophy, and the reputation of having slain a giant (*fr.* 33).

The *Stasiotica* reflect the political partisanship of Alcaeus, whose share in the agitations of Mitylene has been somewhat idealized by later poets.[1] The Emperor Julian[2] said of him that he was given his talent not to express the pleasures of the senses, but to avenge his wrongs. Yet he was a true Aeolian in his estimate of the pleasures of wine and love. In the numerous fragments of his drinking songs he speaks of wine with a sort of ecstasy; his philosophy is that of Omar Khayyám — drown in wine your fears and sorrows; it is wine that loosens the lips and

[1] Cp. *Anth. Pal.* 9. 184: *The sword of Alcaeus was baptized in the blood of tyrants;* and Wordsworth: "When the live chords Alcaeus smote, *Inflamed by sense of wrong.*"

[2] *Misopogon* 337 A.

holds a mirror to the soul (*fr.* 53); plant the vine first (*fr.* 44) — advice which Horace echoes (1. 18). The fragments of love songs are too scanty to be interesting.

The dialect of Alcaeus is Aeolic; his poetry, with that of Sappho,[1] is the norm of Aeolic speech, associated, through them, with the first purely personal songs of Greece. As a writer of local dialect he was useful to grammarians, and was edited by the Alexandrian critics. His meters show great variety and ingenuity. Alcaeus developed the logaoedic rhythms (made up of trochees and dactyls),[2] employing the Sapphic strophe and the so-called Asclepiads, but especially the Alcaic strophe, which received his name and was used by Horace in thirty-seven odes. Even in his *Hymns*, of which we have a few fragments, he abandoned the conventional hexameter for Sapphics and Alcaics.

Dialect

Meters

The interests of Alcaeus were centered in the fierce feuds and griefs of civil war. SAPPHO, though of another generation than he, lived under the same tyrants. As an aristocrat who, though born at Eresus, passed her life at Mitylene, she suffered the exile of which Alcaeus complains, and may have returned to Lesbos under the amnesty of Pittacus (580 B.C.). But the political discords that rent Mitylene left no mark on her poetry; Myrsilus and Pittacus are never named in her fragments. The literary historians constructed a romantic biography for Sappho, but their industry was in proportion to their ignorance. It was the privilege of Greek comedy to deride and outrage all that was classical and canonized. To defy dates and facts, to pretend, like Diphilus in the fourth century, that Archilochus and Hipponax were Sappho's lovers, was one of the stock jests of the later comedians.[3] Sappho, who had perhaps lived in Sicily during

Sappho

[1] On the tradition of his love for Sappho, see below, p. 98.

[2] For a good example of logaoedic rhythm, cp. Shelley's *Night:* "Swiftly walk over the Western Wave, Spirit of Night."

[3] Antiochus of Alexandria wrote a treatise *On the Poets who were ridiculed by the Writers of the Middle Comedy.*

her exile, knew the tale of Sicilian Daphnis, the 'laggard lover,' whom the nymph pursued in vain *by all the fountains, through all the glades* (Theocritus 1. 83). His counterpart in Lesbian folklore was Phaon, the handsome boatman, endowed by Aphrodite with two gifts, a beauty that drew all hearts, and the armor of indifference. Phaon is not mentioned in the fragments of Sappho, but in some lost poem she may have sung of this frigid Lesbian Adonis. At any rate Greek comedy transformed the genuine Sappho, notoriously indifferent to the love of men, into a Sappho who cured her hopeless passion for the hard-hearted Phaon[1] by a leap from the Leucadian cliff, the desperate remedy of pining lovers. Ovid, in the *Heroides* (15), Martial, and the rest handed on the picturesque tradition. Hardly more credible than the scurrilous jests of comedy is the legend that Alcaeus loved Sappho. As the two great poets of Lesbos, as fellow-citizens and contemporaries, their names are constantly linked together. But the only trace of an intimate relation is the fragment of a dialogue quoted by Aristotle. In a Sapphic line Alcaeus is made to say, *I long to speak, but shame prevents my tongue*, to which Sappho retorts in the Alcaic meter that one who is ashamed to speak can have nothing honest to utter (*fr.* 28). Bergk prints the Sapphic line with the fragments of Alcaeus (*fr.* 55), but it is possible that both his words and the repartee were taken from a dramatic poem by Sappho.

Phaon

Alcaeus and Sappho

It is in Herodotus (II 135) that we secure a piece of evidence which helps to fix Sappho's date, and throws some light on her personal history. He tells how Charaxus, her brother, came to Egypt in the reign of King Amasis (570 B.C.), and there fell in love with and ransomed Rhodopis, the beautiful courtesan from Naucratis, for which act of profligacy Sappho, when he returned to Mitylene, ridiculed him in an ode. Within the last decade Egypt, the scene of that extravagance, has given up the fragment of a Sapphic ode which was probably addressed to Charaxus by his sister. The fragment, which dates from the

The Charaxus Ode

[1] Martial 10. 35, *durus Phaon.*

third century A.D., was one of the first and most precious of the Papyri recovered from the rubbish heaps of Oxyrhynchus, about one hundred and twenty miles to the south of Cairo, and was published in 1898.[1] On the strength of their dialect, meter, and style, these four mutilated stanzas are attributed to Sappho. From the beginning of every verse about two words have been torn off, and not a single line is complete. But the conjectures of Blass, Wilamowitz, and Jurenka, though the ode is, perhaps, more theirs than Sappho's, have at least restored the sequence of ideas. Charaxus is about to return from some absence, and Sappho, not now in the mood to satirize his weaknesses, implores the Nereids to bring her brother home that he may recover his good name and confound his enemies. According to Athenaeus, Sappho sang the praises of another brother, Larichus, who stayed at home and was cupbearer to the highest officials of Mitylene, an office reserved to youths of noble birth. The *Charaxus Ode*, if we have not mistaken its drift, is the solitary piece of direct evidence as to Sappho's family life that is to be gleaned from her poems. It would be rash to assume that it is her own child whose beauty, *like that of golden flowers*, she described in *fr.* 85.

What Lesbos in the seventh and sixth centuries offered to a woman of Sappho's genius we must gather partly from the tradition, which depends chiefly on her poems, partly from the allusions in the extant fragments. She was, as Strabo said, a marvel, unapproached by any other woman in history,—a judgment that is as true now as in the time of Augustus. For the finest lyric poetry is love poetry, and more than any other's her verses "strike and sting the memory in lonely places, or at sea, among all loftier sights and sounds . . . seem akin to fire and air, being themselves all air and fire; other element there is none in them."[2] It is not to the Dorian temperament that one would look for poetry like hers, though if among the maidens who danced Alcman's choruses, one had possessed the gifts of Sappho, she would have enjoyed hardly

[1] *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Part I: B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt, London.

[2] Swinburne, *Notes on Poems and Reviews.*

less conventional freedom. In Ionia, on the other hand, or at Athens, where the conventions of Ionia were inherited, a woman must remain obscure or be classed as a courtesan. As an Aeolian, Sappho encountered no such restrictions. She came of a race gifted with a peculiarly keen sense of the charm and reality of the visible world, devoted to the pleasures of the senses, renowned for its beauty and its ardent love of beauty. In Lesbos, at any rate, a woman could be a poet and train other women to take part in the religious festivals and in the mixed choruses that sang 'epithalamia,' wedding songs. That was Sappho's profession at Mitylene, as it was the profession of her rivals, Gorgo and Andromeda[1] (*frag.* 41, 48, 58). The parallel of Socrates and his favorite pupils is not to be forgotten. But Sappho's relation was closer to the maidens whom she trained and who lived in her house 'dedicated to the Muses' (*fr.* 136). On these pupils, Atthis, Gyrinna, and the rest, Sappho lavished a devotion whose expression all have praised, while they hesitated whether to pity or condemn the intensity of feeling, the anguish and ecstasy, that inspired her immortal odes. For Sappho "all thoughts, all passions" were diverted into a single current, and she uttered the secrets of her heart with an ardor and energy that make all other expressions of passion in literature seem incomplete and impersonal. The scandalous Romans, following the degenerate Greeks, found it easy to answer the riddle that her poems present to modern readers. Few scholars now accept their interpretation, since Welcker (1816) made his famous defense of the reputation of a poet whom Plato called 'the Tenth Muse,' and whose image was stamped on the coins of Mitylene.[2]

[1] Maximus of Tyre 24. 8. *What Alcibiades, Charmides, and Phaedrus were to Socrates, Gyrinna, Atthis, and Anactoria were to Sappho. Just as Prodicus, Gorgias, and Thrasymachus were the professional rivals of Socrates, so Gorgo and Andromeda rivaled Sappho.*

[2] E. Meyer, Beloch, and Toepffer are the chief modern adherents to the less charitable view of Sappho's character. In his review of *Les Chansons de Bilitis* by the decadent French poet, Pierre Loüys, Wilamowitz in the *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen*, 1896, sides with Welcker.

To Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the Augustan critic, we owe the preservation of the *Ode to Aphrodite* (*fr.* 1). He quotes it to illustrate the 'smooth style,' in which Sappho, as he thought, excelled even Anacreon and Simonides: *O thou of the divers-colored throne, deathless Aphrodite, child of Zeus, weaver of wiles, I beseech thee, break not my spirit with agony and anguish, O goddess. But come hither, if ever before thou didst hear my voice from afar and hearken. Then thou didst leave thy father's golden house and yoked thy chariot and didst come. Over the dark earth sparrows drew thee, fair and swift, flapping their thick wings as they flew from heaven through the upper air. Quickly they reached my side; and thou, blessed one, smiling with thy deathless face, didst ask what wrong I suffer and why I call, and what in my mad heart I most desire. 'Whom dost thou desire that persuasion should draw to thy love? Who doth thee wrong, Sappho? Nay, even she that flies shall quickly follow; if she would not take thy gifts she shall give to thee, though she love not now she shall soon love thee, yea though unwilling.' Come, I pray thee, now as then, and set me free from the cruel pangs of love, and all that my heart longs to win do thou accomplish, and be thou thyself mine ally* (*fr.* 1).

The Ode to Aphrodite

Another Greek critic, the author of the treatise *On the Sublime*, when he wished to show how a master of the grand style could choose and combine the most striking effects of passion, so as to make the lover at one and the same moment freeze, burn, rave, and reason, quoted as the most famous instance the *Second Ode* of Sappho, which represents 'not one single passion, but a congress of the passions.'[1] This ode, incomplete as we have it, has been echoed in all realistic descriptions of passion, from Euripides to Swinburne. It was imitated rather than translated by Catullus, *To Lesbia*. Of all the classical poets he was the most akin to Sappho, but his version, while it is the best attempt to translate what Swinburne thought untranslatable, seems artificial and elaborate beside the direct simplicity of the

The Second Ode

[1] *On the Sublime*, c. 10.

original. Catullus used the true Sapphic rhythm, not the more rigid, Romanized Sapphic of Horace.

The Epithalamia

The *Epithalamia* of Catullus are the nearest parallels to Sappho's wedding songs, of which we have a few verses only, but those roses, to use the phrase of Meleager: —

Like the sweet apple which reddens upon the topmost bough,
A-top on the topmost twig, — which the pluckers forgot, somehow, —
Forgot it not, nay, but got it not, for none could get it till now.

Like the wild hyacinth flower which on the hills is found,
Which the passing feet of the shepherds for ever tear and wound,
Until the purple blossom is trodden into the ground.[1]

Though Sappho spent her strength on a single theme, there was no danger of monotony in poetry such as hers, with its continual renewal of images. Through the apple boughs and the rustling leaves blows 'the new wine of the wind of spring,' the Cretan women dance on the 'fine soft bloom of the grass'; Love shakes her soul 'like a wind on the mountain that falls on the oaks' (*fr.* 42), or comes from heaven in a mantle that shines bright like fire (*fr.* 64). Strength and fire and delicacy are united in her verses, and without a touch of sentimentality she sang of roses, and the nightingale, and the silver moon.

Meters and dialect

Sappho's name is associated with her favorite stanza, the Sapphic,[2] but even in the fragments there is a marked variety of meters, including choriambs and hexameters. Her dialect, like that of Alcaeus, is pure Lesbian Aeolic, with occasional reminiscences of Homer.

ANACREON (*floruit* 540 B.C.) was a native of Teos, an Ionian city on the coast of Asia Minor. When Harpagus reduced

[1] Rossetti's translation of *frag.* 93, 94. Cp. Catullus 62. 42 ff.

[2] For the Sapphic rhythm, cp. Swinburne's *Sapphics:* "Newly fledged, her visible song, a marvel, Made of perfect sound and exceeding passion, Sweetly shapen, terrible, full of thunders, Clothed with the wind's wings"; and for another of Sappho's meters, his *Choriambics:* "Nay then, sleep if thou wilt; love is content; what should he do to weep?" and Shorey's translation of *fr.* 68: *Thou shalt die and be laid low in the grave, hidden from mortal ken.*

the Asiatic Greeks (545 B.C.), Anacreon joined the exodus of his countrymen from Teos to Abdera, in Thrace. There, in an encounter with the hostile Thracians, like Archilochus, he threw away his shield (*fr.* 28). Another echo of the Thracian episode, more in keeping with the temperament of Anacreon than a reminiscence of warfare, is his address to a Thracian maiden who had rejected his advances (*fr.* 75); the poem was imitated by Horace (1. 23 and 3. 11), who, besides a certain number of verbal echoes of the Teian poet, in his lighter moods constantly recalls the Anacreontic manner. In a colony that must fight for its existence, Anacreon was out of place. He left Abdera for Samos, not far from his native city, summoned by Polycrates, the patron of Ibycus. Of that luxurious court and short-lived tyranny Anacreon was the poet laureate. His poems were full of the impressions and memories of the golden days when he shared the pleasures of Polycrates, sang the praises of the tyrant's favorites, and even, if we are to believe the tradition, influenced the serious policy of his wiser hours. The flute-playing of Bathyllus, the beauty of Smerdis, who was the Antinous of the Samian court, the charms and frailties of Ionian favorites and Ionian courtesans, were the themes most congenial to Anacreon and the tyrant of Samos. When Polycrates fell into the trap laid for him by the Persian satrap Oroetes (522 B.C.), Anacreon's good fortune outlasted his. Hipparchus, the Athenian tyrant, sent a fifty-oared galley to bring the poet in triumph to Athens. There, no doubt, Anacreon lived to see the violent end of his new patron (514 B.C.). After that, the Athenian court, to which the sons of Peisistratus had attracted Simonides of Ceos the choral poet, Lasus of Hermione the writer of dithyrambs, and Anacreon himself, became, under the harsh and suspicious rule of the survivor, Hippias, an uncongenial home for a singer of Anacreon's tastes. It was at Athens that Pausanias saw his statue by the side of that of his friend Xanthippus, the father of Pericles. He lived to be over eighty, and according to one tradition spent his last years at the court of the Aleuadae in Thessaly, haunting to the last the life of a court and the society of

Anacreon

those with whom he could laugh and drink and make love in his gay old age.

Anacreon, like Sappho, is, above all, the poet of love. But, though he is reckoned with them, his verse was never electrified by the passion and vehemence of the Aeolians. Devoted to sensual pleasures, Anacreon preserved the smiling serenity of a temperament really moderate. So he came to be the typical example of an old age that still enjoys, a lighter hearted Mimnermus, whose Ionian levity and ease of manner mask no real passion or strength of character. There is no touch of patriotism in the fragments of Anacreon; only once, when roused by jealousy, does he strike a vigorous note, ridiculing the low birth and acquired luxury of Artemon, who had won from him his mistress Eurypyle (*fr.* 21). The fragments of the hymns to Artemis (*fr.* 1) and Dionysus (*fr.* 2) are merely invocations intended to introduce more frivolous themes, and express no real piety.

Meters and dialect

Anacreon employed a great variety of instruments and meters; the latter were not intricate: iambics and choriambics, elegiacs, and the simpler logaoedics, especially the glyconic in its eight-syllabled form. His dialect is Ionic varied by Aeolic.

Anacreontea

With all his frivolity Anacreon was incapable of the monotonous triviality and flimsy texture of the collection of occasional poems which Estienne (Stephanus) published under his name in 1554. The *Anacreontea* could not impose on scholars; they bear every mark of a post-classical origin; their grammar and dialect, their allusions to the memory of Anacreon, to late art, to rhetoric and decadent theology, all point to the Alexandrian and first Christian centuries; here and there is an echo from the Byzantine period. But among the sixty short lyrics wholly unworthy, for the most part, of Anacreon, are half a dozen that are fanciful and charming, though their inspiration is of the slightest. The poets of sixteenth-century France, especially Ronsard and Rémy-Belleau, who translated the whole (1556), greeted the *Anacreontea* with all the ardor of the Renaissance

for the recovery of a Greek masterpiece.[1] That enthusiasm maintained by Byron, Moore, Leconte de Lisle with his "Ward-our Street Greek," and even Goethe, has only faded before a deeper appreciation of the genuine lyric poetry of the best days of Greece. But the conception of Anacreon that passed into three centuries of European literature will not easily be eradicated. Two kinds of meter are used in the *Anacreontea*, the iambic dimeter and the ionic dimeter; both occur, though rarely, among the varied measures of the genuine fragments of Anacreon. The manuscript, which dates from the tenth or eleventh century A.D., was originally attached to a copy of the *Anthology* of Cephalas, now at Heidelberg.

Eumelus

Eumelus of Corinth lived in the latter half of the eighth century. He wrote historical epic, and early Corinthian poetry of that type was freely ascribed to him as the representative of Corinth. But Eumelus has a place in the history of melic as the author of a prosodion which he composed for a sacred embassy of the Messenians. It was their contribution to the Ionian festival at Delos in honor of Apollo, a special compliment from a Dorian state whose national god was Zeus, worshiped with a similar festival at Ithome. The prosodion was a type of choral song peculiarly associated with Delos. If genuine, as seems probable, the two hexameter lines which tradition assigns to Eumelus are the oldest extant remains of this kind of processional cult song.

Thaletas

Terpander (p. 93) had fixed the character of the first stage of Sparta's musical history; with the second period the name of Thaletas is associated. He came to Sparta from an island famous for its dancing, Dorian Crete, whose city, Cnossos, stamped on her coins the dancing floor which

[1] Ronsard, *Odes* V 15: —

Je vay boire à Henri Etienne
Qui des enfers nous a rendu,
Du vieil Anacreon perdu,
La douce lyre Teïenne.

Daedalus made for Ariadne (*Il.* XVIII 591) ; this was the Cretan labyrinth itself, whose curves and mazes were really a map of the evolutions of the choral dance. Thaletas introduced at Sparta the elaborate dramatic dancing of Crete, and wrote songs to be sung and danced to the music of the flute by choruses of men and boys at the festival of the Gymnopaedia.

Alcman

The influence of Thaletas can be traced in the cretic rhythms used by ALCMAN, who, about the middle of the seventh century, founded choral poetry at Sparta. As the earliest representative of Greek melic, Alcman was placed first in the Alexandrian canon of nine lyric poets. Sardis in Lydia was his birthplace, but though he boasted of his connection with that famous seat of the Lydian monarchy (*fr.* 24), he was probably of Greek descent, as his name implies. His father, whose name, Damas or Titaros, also indicates a Greek origin, may have been a metic or resident alien at Sardis. According to the legend, Alcman was sold as a slave to the Spartan Agesidas. At any rate he became thoroughly identified with Sparta, wrote in her dialect, used her local myths, and set the Dorian stamp on Greek choral lyric. In the militant poetry of Tyrtaeus, a little later, we see the reflection of a community given over to camp life, Sparta at war. Alcman's choral odes are the expression of Sparta at peace, a rare echo of a mood in which the lyre rivalled the sword (*fr.* 35). He created the 'partheneion,' or song of maidens, a type of choral lyric which was peculiarly Dorian, since only Dorian women were permitted by social conventions to appear as members of a chorus at a public festival. We owe our knowledge of the partheneion to the discovery by Mariette in 1855 of an Egyptian papyrus from which have been recovered about a hundred lines of a choral lyric (*fr.* 23) composed by Alcman to be sung by maidens in honor of the Dioscuri, the friendly twin brethren of Spartan legend, or perhaps to Artemis, since her name also occurs (v. 61). The ode of which we have this mutilated fragment began with the recital of a Laconian myth, the tale of the insolence of Hippocoon and his sons and their punishment, perhaps five

strophes as objective as Homer. Then the poet points the moral with a gnomic utterance, *It is the gods who punish insolence* — and on that, like Horace in an ode that is, in some respects, parallel,[1] becomes purely personal and secular. The latter half of the poem expresses the playful rivalry of two maidens of the chorus, the beautiful Agido and the only less beautiful Hagesichora, with her 'golden hair and face of silver,' the chorus leader. There we have the characteristic note of the poetry of Alcman 'the charming,' as the Greeks called him, the gayety and tenderness, the affectionate gallantry, which are so engaging and so unexpected in this Spartan poet. His personal interests were bound up in the training of such choruses, and it was the chief regret of his old age that he could no longer take part in them: —

Maidens with voices like honey for sweetness, that breathe desire,
Would that I were a sea-bird with limbs that could never tire;
Over the foam-flowers flying with halcyons ever on wing,
Keeping a careless heart, a sea-blue bird of the spring![2] (*fr.* 26.)

In another fragment he describes the midnight silence of the lonely hills and the deep sea: *Sleep holds the hill-tops and the passes of the hills, the cliffs sleep and the ravines and all the wild things that the black earth breeds after their kind, the beasts that inhabit the mountains, the tribe of bees, and the monsters in the depths of the shining sea. Even they, too, the flocks of birds fold their long pinions in sleep* (*fr.* 60). The modern parallel of this poem is Goethe's *Ueber allen Gipfeln ist Ruh*, but Alcman omitted the personal application that secures a pathetic climax for the German lyric.[3]

Among the papyrus fragments found at Oxyrhynchus and published in 1898, was part of a partheneion addressed to Demeter

[1] 4. 6.

[2] H. C. Beeching. Cp. Tennyson, *In Memoriam*: "Or underneath the barren bush Flits by *the sea-blue bird of March*."

[3] Lucan's *Pacem summa tenent* (*Phars.* 2. 273) may be an echo of Alcman. Vergil contrasts the peaceful night with the restless heart of Dido. (*Aen.* 4 521.)

by nine maidens who describe their fair raiment and ornaments of carved ivory. The four hexameter verses that survive are either, as Blass believes, genuine Alcman, part of a cult song, or the clever attempt of a later, archaizing poet to imitate his manner, as Theocritus imitated it in his *Eighteenth Idyl.* Tradition made Alcman the founder of love poetry. He was, at any rate, the first literary representative of personal melic. But in the fragments that survive there are no echoes of passion or of war. His gentle gayety is relieved by occasional touches of humor, and even homely realism. He frequently echoes the Homeric myths and language.

Dialect and meters

The Doric of Sparta is blended in his literary dialect with Aeolic and epic forms. His meters were varied and numerous. Ionics, for the first time in literature, iambics, cretics, anapaests, logaoedic rhythms, and dactylic hexameters appear in his fragments. It was probably Alcman, not Stesichorus, who first broke the monotony of the succession of strophe and antistrophe by the use of the epode, and thus created the tripartite system of the Greek choral lyric.

In the last quarter of the seventh century, Lesbos, the birthplace of Terpander, produced a poet whose name, like his, is associated with a definite advance in the history of Greek lyric. It was, however, on a strictly choral type, the dithyramb, that

Arion

ARION of Methymna left his mark. *Arion*, says Herodotus, *composed, named, and represented the dithyramb at Corinth* (1. 23–24). In the same passage he tells the tale which has given picturesqueness to the vague personality of the poet. Arion had wandered to Italy and Sicily, where, as a professional poet and musician, he had acquired great wealth. From Tarentum he embarked for Corinth, then under the rule of Periander (625–585 B.C.). Once clear of the port, the sailors conspired to kill Arion for the sake of his possessions. The poet, seeing himself lost, won their permission to sing for the last time before his death. 'With his singing robes about him' he took his lyre and, having sung the "Orthian nome," leaped into the sea. The ship sailed on to Corinth, but a dolphin received Arion and carried him on its

back to Taenarum, where a bronze statuette of the man and the dolphin existed in the time of Herodotus. How the legend arose, why the dithyrambic poet came to be associated with the dolphin, the symbol of Poseidon, who was actually the rider, Poseidon or another, in that work of art at Taenarum which probably existed before the legend of Arion's escape — all these are matters of conjecture. In the dispute Arion himself fades into a myth. But, for the Greeks, he was the inventor of one of the most important though one of the, to us, least known of the melic forms, the dithyramb or choral song in honor of Dionysus. Arion converted the informal wine song into a choral lyric sung and danced by a circular chorus, and so introduced into Greek literature the dithyrambic type which was the forerunner of the dithyrambs of Bacchylides, Simonides, Pindar, and a host of lesser poets. But he did more than this. He was the first to train choruses of satyrs, the goat choruses which later became characteristic of Attic tragedy. It was on the score of his long residence at Corinth, where he trained his cyclic choruses, that the Corinthians claimed the invention of tragedy. His dithyrambs were sung to the flute and in the Phrygian mode, always recognized as peculiarly appropriate to this wild and orgiastic type of lyric.

The dithyramb

We do not know what meters Arion used, or what were precisely the innovations that made him famous. The fragment that passes under his name in Bergk's collection is addressed to Poseidon in gratitude for his escape. Its dialect, Attic mixed with Doric, its meter, too elaborate for early choral lyric, its florid style, prove that it is the work of some late, possibly fourth-century, writer of dithyramb. Another sign of lateness is the disregard of the strophic arrangement.

About a generation later than Alcman's prime, arose the most original of the poets of Dorian stock, Stesichorus of Himera, in Sicily, whose appellative, the 'choir-setter,' has obscured his true name, Teisias. He belonged to a family of western Locrians who were among the earliest settlers of Himera, founded in 648 B.C.; with him the Greek colonies of

Stesichorus

the West begin to play their part in literature. It is probable that Stesichorus, whose fame was to be international, never visited Greece. Aristotle (*Rhet.* 2. 20) relates that, when the citizens of Himera were about to put themselves in the power of Phalaris of Agrigentum, the tyrant whom the story of the brazen bull has rendered infamous, Stesichorus recited to them his fable of the horse and the stag as a warning. It was perhaps to avoid the anger of Phalaris that he fled to Catana, where he died; he was buried outside the 'Stesichorean gate' in an octagonal tomb whose eight columns gave its name to a throw at dice. In the third century B.C. his image was stamped on the coins of Himera, and there Cicero saw his statue.

'Stesichorus,' says Quintilian,[1] 'bore the weight of the epos on his lyre.' In him 'the soul of Homer dwelt again.' What he achieved was, in fact, a sort of revival of epic in lyric forms. He created the heroic lyric, which proved to be the most truly international of all the varieties of Greek choral melic. A fragment of Simonides, written a century later, says that *Homer and Stesichorus sang to the nations* (*fr.* 53), and throughout Greek literature there persists this association of the Ionian poet and the 'lyric Homer' of Sicily. We do not know for what ends Stesichorus composed the lyrics into which he took over the heroic sagas. Only about fifty verses survive, and a dozen titles, all suggestive of the epic, *e.g.* the *Returns* and the *Sack of Ilios*. In the *Oresteia* (*fr.* 37), he calls his lyric 'a song for the people,' which implies that it was intended for popular festivals; perhaps these were in honor of the Homeric heroes whose exploits he sang. With him choral lyric developed larger outlines in order to receive the heroic legends, so that his amplitude offended critics who resented in a lyric the fullness and breadth of Homer. In the history of choral lyric, Pindar is the true successor of Stesichorus; it was he who perfected the art of confining epic narrative within the limits of the ode, and achieved the grand style of which the Sicilian fell short.

The 'lyric Homer'

[1] 10. 1. 62.

As we have seen from Alcman, there was nothing essentially new in the use of epic legends by a choral lyric poet. Stesichorus, however, showed his originality in the freedom with which he handled them. Though he drew on the sagas that he found in Homer, Hesiod, and the cyclic poets, he broke with their traditions and boldly remodeled the heroic myths. Heracles was a local Dorian hero, alien to the Ionians and Aeolians. Stesichorus, by developing the legends that transformed Heracles, the Dorian ideal, into the type of the toiling hero, gave him an international interest. The famous apostrophe to Helen, *Nay the tale is false; never didst thou sail in the well-benched ships, never came to the towers of Troy* (*fr.* 32), is quoted by Plato,[1] who calls it a 'palinode,' a formal recantation wrung from Stesichorus when Helen blinded him for adhering to the slanders of the less prudent Homer. Whether the blindness was real or only a picturesque legend, Stesichorus it was who created the legend of a phantom Helen for whom the Greeks and Trojans fought, while the real Helen waited for Menelaus in Egypt. So, too, Herodotus (2. 112) tells the tale, and Euripides modeled his *Helena* on the Stesichorean version. There are, in fact, few of the heroic myths of Greece, as we meet them in the later poets and the Attic tragedians, which the imagination of Stesichorus has not modified; at any rate it is a literary convention to hold him responsible for such changes as the epic tradition has suffered. A striking proof of his popularity is the frequency with which his versions of the myths are reproduced in Greek art.[2] We know little of the love poems in which Stesichorus related the sorrows of Kalyke who took the Leucadian leap, and Rhadina, slain with her lover by the jealous tyrant of Corinth; they seem to have marked the first appearance in literature of the objective, impersonal love poem, a foreshadowing of Greek romance. Sicilian Daphnis, the chief figure of later bucolic poetry, was still, in the seventh century, a hero of folk song only. Stesichorus used this popular legend in his lyrics, but they must have been wholly unlike the sophisticated, bucolic type of poetry as we

[1] *Phaedrus* 243. [2] Robert, *Bild und Lied*, Berlin, 1881.

find it among the Alexandrians. Twenty-six books of poems were ascribed to Stesichorus. His lyrics were known throughout Greece, so that in the fifth century Aristophanes could assume that an Athenian audience would recognize a parody of the Sicilian poet (*Peace*, 775). His dialect is epic with Doric forms, a mixture such as would appeal to the international audience to whom he became as familiar as Homer. His poems were not, like Alcman's, accompanied by the dance, though he regularly used the threefold strophic arrangement which was ever after the rule in Greek choral lyric.

Dialect

Ibycus

Ibycus of Rhegium, in southern Italy (*floruit circa* 544 B.C.), like Stesichorus a poet from the West, came from a city founded originally by a mixed colony of Ionians and Dorians. It is impossible to determine closely the descent of a poet in whose writings, as possibly in his blood, are to be traced the characteristics of the three great divisions of the Greek people. Ibycus wrote in the Dorian manner, employing the choral meters and strophes of Stesichorus, and, following in his steps, adapted the heroic saga, the tales of the Argonauts, and the Heracles legend to the uses of objective choral lyric. Here he was not without originality; for instance, the legend of Menelaus disarmed by the beauty of Helen was first used by Ibycus. In contrast with the formal stateliness and impersonality of Stesichorus, his poetry is passionate and full of life and color, Ionian or Aeolian in its expression of the individual emotions. He was famous for his erotic poems, addressed to boys, which preserved the form of choral melic. In the fragments he sings of spring and *Cydonian apple trees watered by the river streams that flow in the quiet garden of the nymphs, and the blossoms that are putting forth under the shady leafage of the vine. But as for me*, he cries, *Love will not let me rest at any hour. Like the North Wind from Thrace that rages amid the lightning's fire, leaping from the side of Cypris he comes, terrible and undaunted, to consume my heart with madness and shake my soul to the core* (*fr.* 1).

In his passionate enthusiasm for beauty, his love of flowers and

birds, there is an echo of Sappho, a sensuous appreciation that is alien to the Dorian temper, so that Aristophanes in the *Thesmophoriazousae* (161) spoke of Ibycus as one who, like his contemporary Anacreon, had become soft and effeminate from contact with the luxury of the East. Such was probably the influence of the court of Polycrates of Samos, that magnificent tyrant who, for ten years (532–522 B.C.), defying Greece and Persia, made Samos the most powerful and richest island in the Aegean. There Ibycus spent a portion of his wandering life. It is not till four hundred years later that we find in Antipater's epigram in the *Anthology* (7. 745), the first allusion to a legend which Schiller's poem, *Die Kraniche des Ibykus*, has made familiar to many. The story, to which Plutarch adds some details, relates that Ibycus was murdered by robbers in a lonely place near the sea. As he died, he called on a passing flock of cranes to avenge one who had sung of 'long-winged birds' with peculiar tenderness. His prayer was granted by the gods, who regularly, as in the tale of Archilochus, punish those who do violence to poets, or save their favorites as the Dioscuri saved Simonides. The cranes flew over the theater at Corinth, whereupon the agitation and involuntary exclamations of the murderers, who were present, betrayed them to the rest of the audience. The "cranes of Ibycus" (*Ibyci grues*) passed into a proverb.

At Samos

The Cranes of Ibycus

While Anacreon, crowned with flowers, enjoyed the last years of the prosperity of Hipparchus, another Ionian poet, some twenty years his junior, was already, at the same court, writing lyrics that were to have a more brilliant and a more dignified popularity. Simonides of Ceos (556–467 B.C.), though, like Anacreon, he passed from court to court, as the fortunes of his royal patrons rose or fell, was destined in the end to stand as the chief poet of the glories of the Athenian democracy. He belonged to a family which must have been the pride of Ceos, since it produced Simonides and his nephew, Bacchylides. Soon after the death of Hipparchus, who had encouraged him to leave

Simonides

his native island, where he had made a name as a trainer of Dorian choruses, he visited the small and half barbarous courts of the Thessalian princes, the Scopadae of Crannon and the Aleuadae of Larissa. It is to their connection with Simonides that these petty tyrants owe their place, slight as it is, in history. *He gave them a name among men*, says Theocritus, *singing bright songs to a harp of many strings.*[1]

An extant fragment of a Scolion is, in fact, addressed to Scopas; some thirty verses have been reconstructed from the *Protagoras* (339 ff.), in which Plato discusses at length the precise meaning of the poet's decidedly sophistical rhetoric, his cynical apology for the man who fails to 'stand foursquare'; the worldly wise poet refuses to set his ethical standard too high, since negative virtue is as much as one may demand of his Thessalian patron (*fr.* 5). From the accident of a falling roof which, according to the legend, destroyed the Scopadae, Simonides was miraculously preserved by the divine favor so often extended to Greek poets; on this occasion it was the Dioscuri who summoned him from the doomed palace, and so paid their debt for an ode in which, with, for him, unusual piety, he had neglected the Scopadae to celebrate the divine twins.

From Thessaly Simonides returned to Athens, no less at home with the democrats than, in earlier days, at the court of the Peisistratids. He was now the voice of the Athenian democracy, and it was with no insincerity that he paid his tribute to the heroes Harmodius and Aristogeiton: *For the Athenians a great light dawned on the day when they slew Hipparchus* (*fr.* 131). The lyrics and elegies of Simonides are the most striking memorials of the victories of Athens over the Persians. His elegy on those who fell at Marathon (490) was preferred to that of Aeschylus himself. One of the finest extant fragments is from the ode, technically an 'encomium,' in honor of Leonidas and the heroes of Thermopylae: *Of those who died at Thermopylae glorious is the fate and fair the destiny. No tomb for them, but an altar; no tears, but fame instead, and, for lamentation, praise. A monument like*

[1] *Idyl* 16. 34.

this, rust shall not corrupt nor time that destroys all else (*fr.* 4). Even more famous is the elegiac couplet whose proud reserve and laconic style are admirably suited to a Spartan epitaph : *Stranger, tell the Lacedaemonians that their order is obeyed and we lie here* (92). Thermopylae, Artemisium, Salamis, and Plataea, the four famous encounters of the second Persian invasion, inspired the greater part of the epigrams of Simonides at a time when individuals as well as cities claimed the honor of inscriptions that should record their share in the repulse of Xerxes. It may be that few of the eighty epigrams that are collected under the name of Simonides were actually composed by him ; certainly, few would satisfy the tests of modern scholars.[1] But what the collection proves is that among all the poets whose imagination was fired by these events to compose epigrams which, later, were to rank as historical tradition, Simonides stood first ; his name was inevitably lavished on compositions in which was expressed all the personal and national pride of his generation. In 476 B.C., at the age of eighty, he won a prize at Athens with a cyclic chorus ; in the same year he went to Syracuse at the invitation of Hiero and there, nine years later, he died.

Epigrams

For a choral poet to write elegies and epigrams was unusual, and it was as a choral poet that Simonides won his fame. In the exhibitions of dithyrambic choruses encouraged by Hipparchus at Athens, he was the successful rival of Lasus of Hermione, winning fifty-six prizes for dithyrambs which have all perished ; many of these were, no doubt, heroic, dealing with myths that had no connection with Dionysus. But it is the chief distinction of this Ionian poet, whose Muse 'gathered all things to her harvest' (*fr.* 46), that he set the seal of his peculiar excellence on two types of Dorian choral lyric which had not hitherto taken their place in literature, the 'epinikion' or song of victory and the 'threnos,' the song of lament. A famous hymn of Archilochus to Heracles, with its refrain 'Hail to the conquering

Dithyrambs

[1] Wilamowitz, *Simonides der Epigrammatiker*, in *Götting. Nachrichten*, 1897, following Kaibel, rejects at least two thirds of Bergk's collection.

hero,' which had been regularly sung at the evening procession in honor of an Olympian victor, was abandoned in the sixth and fifth centuries, by all who could afford a special ode composed by some distinguished living poet. The new fashion gave an opening for a more personal expression of the praises of the victor, and Simonides set the example followed by Pindar and Bacchylides of making a myth the foundation of the ode; the narrative led the hearer away from the victor and relieved the monotony of flattering phrases; and in the end the glory of the present was dexterously interwoven with the splendid traditions of the past. Thus the ode was redeemed from its occasional character and became something more than the triumph of an hour. If we may decide from the scanty fragments of the *Epinicia* of Simonides, his manner was more personal than Pindar's; he idealized less and lingered longer on the details of the contest.

Epinicia

The purely personal lyric which, for the Aeolians, was an outlet for the emotions, was alien to the temperament of Simonides, the well-balanced, self-conscious artist, while in the composition of songs of victory he was to be surpassed by his younger contemporary, Pindar. But he had a special gift for the pathetic. His 'threnoi,' songs of lament, the *Ceae neniae* of Horace (*Odes* 2. 1), were written to be sung to the flute at funeral ceremonies, and won a unique reputation for their power of exciting pity and soothing grief. This worldly poet, whose elastic disposition made him the friend of kings and democrats, was never more successful than when he had to express the sadness of bereavement. His melancholy was resigned and thorough, and he offered the mourner no such picture of a future life and its rewards as are to be found in Pindar's stately songs of consolation. His outlook was bounded by the grave, but he could touch the heart. The famous *Danae and Perseus* fragment (37), regularly included among the 'threnoi' of Simonides, is perhaps from a dithyramb, but in any case it illustrates that power of pathos for which he became proverbial. If a dirge, it may well have been written for some bereaved princess of Thessaly, where, at Larissa

Threnoi

especially, Perseus was a familiar figure in mythical tradition. The fragment contains only the lament of Danae: *Shut in the carven chest, when the wind blew and the sea was troubled, fear fell on her and her cheeks were wet with tears. She took Perseus in her arms and said: O my child, what grief is mine! Lo, thou art asleep; thy childish heart can repose in this brass-bound chest, our fearful ship, in the thick darkness of night without a star. The salt spray of the wave that passes wets thy soft hair, but thou dost not heed nor hear the wind moan, lying there in the purple coverlet with thy fair face close-pressed. Ah! but if the danger were danger to thee thou wouldst lend that little ear to my words. Nay, I bid thee sleep, my child, and may the sea sleep too, sleep my unmeasured sorrow. May fairer days come from thee, O Zeus, father of my child, and if my prayer be overbold, if it offend justice, pardon me* (*fr.* 37).

The character of Simonides depends, for modern readers, chiefly on the caprice of those who quoted the scanty fragments of the longer lyrics. If we judge him from these, it is inevitable to contrast his conventional morality and lightly worn religion with the moral earnestness and narrower, deeper piety of Pindar. Professionalism in intellectual things was always repulsive to the Greeks, and Simonides suffered in reputation because he was one of the first professional poets. Ibycus and Anacreon were paid voices, and Pindar did not write his odes for nothing. But since they escaped the charge of commercialism, while Simonides became a proverb of avarice, his love of gain must have been more obvious or more crudely expressed than theirs. He was frankly adaptable and diplomatic, ready to adjust the quarrels of tyrants, as when he reconciled Hiero and another patron, Thero of Agrigentum, and his worldly wisdom almost lifted him into the ranks of the Greek sages. But in the end he is remembered mainly as the saddest of the Greek lyrists, the weeping poet,[1] as Heracleitus is the weeping philosopher. He wrote in a

[1] "High from his throne in heaven, Simonides, Crowned with mild aureole of memorial tears." — SWINBURNE.

literary dialect of epic mixed with Doric and slightly varied with Aeolic forms; his favorite meters are logaoedics, and he frequently employs dactylic rhythms.

Dialect and meters

Greece produced few women whose poetry was destined to leave its mark; Sappho has no real rival. Erinna of Telos, an island near Rhodes, was called the pupil of Sappho, but probably belonged to the fourth century B.C. She wrote in Doric, and is said to have composed an epic of three hundred verses, called *The Spindle*, 'worthy of Homer.' Those Alexandrians who, like Callimachus or Asclepiades, thought it was both useless and in bad taste to attempt Homeric epic, pointed to this short poem as a model of what might still be done. The *Thebais* of Antimachus of Colophon, on the other hand, they thought a good example how not to write epic. In an epigram in the *Anthology*,[1] Antipater praises Erinna precisely for this brevity, which was to secure her a better chance of immortality than the longer epics of the less judicious imitators of Homer. The fact remains that Erinna perished, while the *Argonautica* of Apollonius of Rhodes, of some six thousand lines, has survived.

Erinna

Telesilla of Argos was a warrior poet; like Tyrtaeus, she fought for her country, which honored her with a statue and a place in its legends. Praxilla of Sicyon is said to have written dithyrambs, as became a native of a city famous for its patronage of that type of lyric. The last of this group, Corinna, a Boeotian of Tanagra or Thebes, achieved some distinction in choral lyric. Five times, according to tradition, she won the first place in competition with Pindar, her younger contemporary. Her beauty and her patriotic preference for the Boeotian dialect helped her to these triumphs, if we may believe Pausanias. Corinna's fame was local, limited by her dialect. She wrote choruses for girls, epigrams and nomes, employing, as we see from a few short fragments, the simpler forms of logaoedic meters, and hexameters.

Telesilla

Praxilla

Corinna

[1] 7. 713. "Better the Swan's chant than a windy world of rooks in the April sky!" — A. Lang's translation.

Boeotian myths held the first place in her poems. From Corinna Pindar learned the proper use of the myth as an ornament of choral lyric.

Pindar

PINDAR (522–442 B.C.) was born at Cynoscephalae, near Thebes, of an aristocratic family, a branch of the Aegidae, a famous clan which had helped to found Sparta. Athens, already the "mother of arts," fostered the genius of the greatest lyric poet of Greece; there he was trained in the elaborate technique of choral composition, and perhaps learned from Lasus of Hermione how to write dithyrambs. Agathocles and Apollodorus taught him music. Finally, the Boeotian poetess, Corinna, gave him lessons in taste, advising him *not to sow with the whole sack* the mythical allusions which are the essential ornament of Greek choral lyric. How he profited by that training and won a name outside Thebes, we can judge from the earliest extant poem, the *Tenth Pythian*. He was only twenty, and Simonides was in his prime, when the Aleuadae of Larissa employed Pindar to write this ode for Hippocleas, a young Thessalian noble who had won the foot race at the Pythian games (502 B.C.). Twelve years later, in the year of Marathon (490 B.C.), he composed the *Seventh Pythian* for the Athenian Megacles. In the great duel between East and West which was to secure the supremacy of Hellenic over barbarian civilization, the exact shade of Pindar's patriotism is still disputed. Simonides, the Ionian, could sing without reserve the victories of Athens and Sparta. But Pindar was a son of Thebes which had welcomed the ambassadors of Darius, and was now the open ally of Xerxes. Delphi, to whose policy he inclined by reason of the sacerdotal strain in his blood and personal associations, discouraged the patriots, and Pindar went with Thebes and Delphi. The proof of his Medism lies rather in the direct statement of Polybius (4. 31) than in the extant poems. But he may be judged by what he leaves unsaid. Marathon in the *Odes* figures as the center of some local games; Plataea, closely connected with the humiliation of Thebes, he barely mentions, and then

Medism

indirectly. In later years, when his patriotism had broadened, he sang the praises of Athens, *the bulwark of Hellas*, in a strain that offended the Thebans, naturally sensitive on this point. Pindar was fined a thousand drachmas, whereupon Athens paid the fine, and, for centuries, found no flattery sweeter or more persuasive[1] than the epithets *shining* and *violet-crowned* in the Theban poet's dithyramb (*fr.* 46).

Praise of Athens

Like Simonides, Pindar lived at the courts of Syracuse and Agrigentum, and, though it was only after repeated refusals that he accepted Hiero's invitation, he stayed in Sicily for several years, composing some of his finest *Olympian* and *Pythian Odes* to celebrate the achievements of the two Dorian princes, Hiero and Thero. At Syracuse he must have met Epicharmus, the founder of Sicilian Comedy, Aeschylus, Simonides, and Bacchylides. In point of time Pindar stands between the two Ionian poets of choral lyric. Superior at all points to Bacchylides, he was himself no match for Simonides where, as in a dirge, pathos rather than splendor was appropriate. Pindar's *First Olympian* was written for the same occasion as the *Fifth Ode* of Bacchylides. The tradition of an unfriendly rivalry is to some extent supported by passages in Pindar's *Odes*.[2] Acusilaus of Cyrene and Alexander of Macedon gave commissions to Pindar, and he may have visited those places. The date of his death is uncertain, but he is supposed to have reached the age of eighty, and if we take the latest certain date of an extant poem (452 B.C. for *Ol.* 4) as marking the limit of his activity, his career covers half a century.

Of all the types of Greek choral lyric, hymns, paeans, hyporchemata, prosodia, partheneia, dithyrambs and dirges, encomia and epinicia, we know well only the last, the songs of victory — the most important of all, since they played the most distinguished part. We have fragments of Pindar's work in all these

[1] Aristophanes, *Acharn.* 636, said that the Athenians could be wheedled into making concessions to any foreign embassy that would flatter Athens with these adjectives.

[2] *Ol.* 2. 94–97; *Pyth.* 2. 52–56; *Nem.* 3. 82; 7. 105; *Isthm.* 2. 6.

types, as well as remains of drinking songs (scolia) to which he may have given a choral form. But his genius can be fairly estimated from the epinicia only, the forty-four extant odes of victory which he wrote for the four great athletic contests of Greece, at Olympia, Delphi, Nemea, and the Isthmus of Corinth. Local contests of the same sort were held throughout Greece, but these four were the national games. The Greeks, who refused political ties, preferring the isolation of individual cantons, made a signal concession to the Pan-Hellenic spirit when they met at these gatherings to honor Zeus, Apollo, and Poseidon. To win the Dorian parsley at the Isthmus, or the pale olive wreath of Olympia, or the withered parsley of Nemea, was a 'luxury of honor' that none of the prizes of later life could throw into the shade. Not less than his wreath the victor must have prized the ode, that 'finest breath of speech' which glorified him on the spot and, later, was sung at his home. It was the idealized and immortal expression of the applause of the hour that greeted the athlete when, flushed with success, *in the flower of youth and beauty, he passed through the ring of spectators* (*Ol.* 9. 100). All Greece agreed with Alcinous of Phaeacia that *there is no greater glory for a man while yet he lives than that which he achieves by hand and foot.*[1]

The Epinicia

Such an ode was essentially a personal song of praise. But it was the task of the poet to lift the athlete and his triumph out of the local and ephemeral interests of the event, and to bring him into relation with the past of a race whose myths were always dearer to them and even nearer than their history. While, therefore, all Greek choral lyric was essentially narrative, the song of victory above all, after the praises of the victor, told a tale and pointed its moral. Corinna's first warning to Pindar not to neglect the myth was really more important than her criticism of his too lavish use of it. A typical song of victory, such as the *Fourth Pythian*, relates an epic myth, the tale of the Argonauts, but not in the epic manner. Homer

The myths

[1] *Od.* 8. 148.

tells a tale for its own sake; for Pindar it is the ornament of a panegyric, illustrates a special event, conveys a lesson. The epic poet could linger over similes, could fill in his background with detail; Pindar must employ the more rapid metaphor, and give his picture in a few swift strokes. Even his ethical meditations, the genuine reflex of his soul, are uttered by the way, without the rhetorical argument so dear to the gnomic poets, and often form a transition as he passes on from the victor to the myth or harks back to the real occasion of the ode. The metaphors themselves change quickly, are 'mixed,' a characteristic of all rapid and picturesque language. For instance, in the *Fourth Pythian*, Jason *distilled his soft speech to lay the foundation of wise utterance* (137).

Style

One must never forget that Pindar's lyrics were conditioned by their elaborate musical accompaniment. Dialogue, though he does not avoid it, was difficult for his trailing style, in which the appeal must always have been to the ear rather than to the intelligence. When he wrote an ode, Pindar went to work like the architect of a splendid and far-seen dwelling, and behind its outward splendor the building was hardly less intricate than the labyrinthine chambers of a Cretan palace.[1] The formal responsions, the nice balancing of strophes or of triads (strophe, antistrophe, and epode), the complicated pattern in which every change of stitch contributes to the symmetry — all this elaboration was an added beauty to the Greek ear; to the modern reader it is an added difficulty. It is for this reason that Pindar is the scholar's poet, too austere, too ingenious, too liable to an unexpected homeliness of allusion to appeal to those who demand that poetry shall be direct and lucid and consistently impassioned. A Pindaric ode combines the impressiveness of the Hebrew scriptures, the simplicity of a ballad, and the elaborate

[1] The theory of Westphal and Mezger that nearly all the Pindaric odes are built on the model of a nome of Terpander with its seven divisions, is rejected by Wilamowitz, J. H. H. Schmidt, Croiset, Gildersleeve, Bury, and H. W. Smyth.

effects of a modern opera. "Pindar is a poet," said Matthew Arnold, when he coined the word "Pindarism" to express the power of throwing all one's force into style — "on whom, above all other poets, the power of style seems to have exercised an inspiring and intoxicating effect."[1] Pindar's "spiritual excitement" is indeed profound and consistent, but it is expressed in a manner now naïve, now magnificent. This was no outrage to the Hellenic sense of beauty, but to the modern ear there are passages in the *Odes* that seem as incongruous as the mule races that were run in the splendid hippodrome of Olympia. It was for a victor in a mule race that Pindar wrote the *Sixth Olympian*, with its exquisite description of the flower cradle of the child Iamus, who lay *hidden in an impenetrable thorn brake, his delicate body steeped in the yellow and deep purple rays of pansies* (54 ff.).[2]

"Pindarism"

Pindar was an Orphic, or at least deeply influenced by Orphic doctrines. There are many allusions in his odes to the future life, its punishments and rewards, such as the picture in the *Second Olympian* of the happy dead whose reward is to dwell with Zeus

> "Where the soft Ocean breezes float for ever
> Around the Islands of the Blest.
> There golden bloom to bloom succeeds,
> Through springs that never tire.
> They fill with light the ground below,
> Athwart the shining trees they glow;
> Their growth the very water feeds,
> Hid under flowers of fire."[3]

But it was in the dirges especially that he would dwell, with a concreteness rare in Greek poetry, on the flowery meadows, the fruits, the frankincense, and the music that await the souls of the good. None of the fragments, with their resolute turning away from the grief of the moment, contain

Dirges

[1] *Celtic Literature*, p. 110. [2] Imitated by Matthew Arnold, *Merope*.
[3] 77 ff. Translated by Sir Francis Doyle.

any such picture of personal sorrow as made the reputation of the tender laments of Simonides.

We have a few fragments of the 'bold dithyrambs' which impressed Horace[1] with their "full-flowing river of speech" and the novelty of their diction. The last feature, especially the coining of compound epithets, seems fully as characteristic of the *Odes*, to us at least who must judge from the scanty fragments of the dithyrambs. When Horace goes on to speak of the 'lawlessness' of Pindar's dithyrambic style, we may suppose that he referred to his neglect of strophic arrangement in this type of ode. The longest fragment, of twenty-one lines (*fr.* 75), was composed for a dithyrambic contest at Athens, to be sung in the agora at one of the spring festivals in honor of Dionysus at which the successful chorus wore crowns of roses, the sacred flower of the god.

Dithyrambs

In the *Odes* Pindar does not disguise his personal sympathies. Though not himself of pure Dorian blood, he was a Dorian in soul, his ideal prince was Dorian Thero, his favorite constitution that of Dorian Aegina, for whose citizens he composed about one fourth of the extant odes. His heroes are rarely drawn from Homer's gallery of Achaean princes, but he is loud in the praise of Ajax, whom they insulted, while he detests Odysseus, the national hero of Ionia. By breeding and temperament Pindar was in sympathy with his countryman Hesiod, Homer's traditional rival. Boeotia was a proverb among the Ionians for the slow wits which they declared matched the heavy air of the country. Pindar makes the usual retort of dwelling on the offensive epithet, and turns the ancient reproach of his race, *Boeotian Swine*, into a jest (*Ol.* 6. 90). For all his praise of Athens, he remains anti-Ionian, anti-democratic, incapable of the cosmopolitanism of Simonides.

Pindar's personal enjoyment of life was keen. The fragment of a scolion (*fr.* 123) which, in his old age, he addressed to Theox-

[1] *Odes* 4. 2. Cp. Cowley's *Praise of Pindar:* "So Pindar does new words and figures roll Down his impetuous dithyrambic tide, Which in no channel deigns to abide, Which neither banks nor dikes control."

enus, has all the fire of youth. But he had under his eyes the unstable fortunes of the Sicilian dynasties, and his profession, the celebration of athletic triumphs, brilliant as glass and no less brittle, fostered his sense of the transient nature of all earthly interests. The *Eighth Pythian* was written as a song of victory, but its tone justified the scholiast who called it a 'lament for human destiny.' *In an hour the delight of man waxes great,* cries Pindar, when he has sung the success of his Aeginetan friend, *so in an hour it falls to the ground, when fortune turns her face aside. Man is the creature of a day. What is he? what is he not? the shadow of a dream* (*Pyth.* 8. 92 ff.). But though hardly an ode of Pindar is without some reminder of the vanity of human ambition, the lofty serenity of his religious belief remained unshaken; his gods are jealous and inflexible, but they are incapable of the corruption that disfigures the primitive legends.[1]

Metaphors

Pindar loved every effect of fire and light; in his favorite metaphors everything blazes and flashes, the feet of the victor, fame, wealth, the joy of living, the rays of glory from his own songs. He wrote in all the three moods — Aeolian, Dorian, and Lydian. His dialect is a mixture; the basis 'epic,' with frequent Aeolic and Doric forms. Though he used the lively logaoedic and paeonic meters, he preferred the more stately dactylo-epitrite (—∪——).

Dialect

Meters

After Ronsard (1550) wrote his odes designed to show *le moyen de suivre Pindare*, a long succession of English poets adopted what they took to be the Pindaric manner of composing odes. Cowley and Shadwell in the seventeenth century, Congreve and Gray in the eighteenth, and many others, wrote 'Pindaric' odes, sometimes following the regular Greek arrangement of strophe, antistrophe, and epode, but for the most part allowing themselves great irregularity of form.[2]

The Alexandrians admitted into their canon of Greek lyric poets

[1] *Pyth.* 3, *Ol.* 9, *Ol.* 1.

[2] For a discussion of English Pindaric odes, see Gosse's Introduction to his *English Odes*.

nine names, Alcman, Alcaeus, Sappho, Stesichorus, Ibycus, Anacreon, Simonides, Pindar, and Bacchylides.[1] Of these, Anacreon, Simonides, and Bacchylides were Ionians. Anacreon counts with the Aeolians as a writer of monodic lyric; Simonides, the greatest lyric poet of his race, employed the Dorian rhythms and language in his choral odes; finally, BACCHYLIDES of Ceos wrote his choral songs after the type that had been set by Simonides and Pindar.

Bacchylides

Little is known of the life of Bacchylides. To the fact that he was the nephew of Simonides he probably owed his introduction to the court of Hiero; his *floruit* occurs about 468 B.C. when he composed an ode in honor of Hiero's Olympian victory. In the fourth century A.D. it is recorded that the Emperor Julian read his poems, and as late as the fifth century there is evidence that they were well known to anthologists and scholiasts. But in the Revival of Learning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Bacchylides played no part, and it was not till the closing years of the nineteenth that the sands of Egypt gave up the single papyrus manuscript on which we depend. Until 1897, the date of the first edition, Bacchylides could be estimated only from the brief fragments — the longest was only twelve lines — collected by Bergk chiefly from the late anthologist Stobaeus. The new manuscript contains fourteen odes of victory, the number of Pindar's *Olympian Odes*, and six other choral lyrics, in all more than a thousand lines either perfect or admitting of restoration. The date of the papyrus is the first century B.C. or possibly a century later.[2]

Recovery of the poems

Like Pindar, Bacchylides wrote Olympian, Pythian, Isthmian, and Nemean odes; the present collection of fourteen epinicia[3]

[1] An epigram in the *Palatine Anthology* 9. 184, addresses the nine canonical poets and recognizes the charm of Bacchylides in the phrase 'Siren with the gift of speech.'

[2] Blass.

[3] The *Epinician Odes* are not grouped as in the manuscripts of Pindar according to festivals, but with reference to the home of the victor.

includes a Petraean Ode, in honor of a victory at some Thessalian games known as the Petraea and dedicated to Poseidon. The recovery of the *Epinicia* of Bacchylides, though we can only regard it as a selection, has relieved the isolation that partly accounts for the fact that Pindar is antipathetic to the modern reader. An estimate of Pindar always reads like an apology, and partly for the reason that he created his own standard, and in his conception of the strain that suited a prize poem — a literary type wholly alien to our sympathies — he seemed to us, even among the Greeks, to walk alone. We can better estimate his essential qualities when we see how the same events and the same atmosphere inspired a contemporary poet, his Ionian rival. Twice they were commissioned to celebrate the same victory. Pindar's *First Pythian* and the *Fourth Ode* of Bacchylides[1] both commemorate Hiero's success in the chariot race at Delphi, in 470 B.C. But here there was no direct competition: to Pindar was assigned the more elaborate ode, the more distinguished celebration; Bacchylides holds the inferior commission. Six years before that, however, Hiero had won the single-horse race at Olympia (476 B.C.). *The highest height tops itself for kings*, wrote Pindar in the *First Olympian*, at this moment when the Sicilian tyrant seemed the brilliant favorite of the gods, before disease had begun to overshadow all his triumphs.[2] It was for the same occasion that Bacchylides composed the longest of his extant poems, the *Fifth Ode*, which, after the oblivion of some fourteen hundred years, again invites comparison with the famous *First Olympian*, that 'finest flower of all that Pindar wrote.' (Lucian, *The Dream* 7.) For the central theme of his ode Pindar chose the tale of a chariot race in the dim past, and sang how mighty Pelops won Hippodameia by the help of

The Epinicia

The rival of Pindar

[1] The references to Bacchylides are according to Kenyon's *editio princeps*, 1897.

[2] Pindar's *Third Pythian* (?474 B.C.) and the *Third Ode* of Bacchylides (468 B.C.), though composed in honor of Hiero's victories at Olympia and Delphi, are designed to console him for sickness and approaching death.

Poseidon, to whom he prayed, *coming to the edge of the gray sea, alone, in the darkness of night. . . . Keep back the brazen spear of Oenomaus. . . . No coward is he whom so great a danger inspires. Man must surely die; why then should he sit idly and nurse in the dark an inglorious old age? Nay, this adventure shall be mine, and do thou give me the issue I desire.* Pindar dwells in this ode on the beauty of water, of gold, of fire, of the sun, and finally on the "honor and sweet rest" that are the portion of all Olympian victors from Pelops to Hiero. In his *Fifth Ode* Bacchylides passes from the praise of Hiero and his race-horse to the reflection, inevitable in a Greek poet when he contemplates human achievement, that no mortal can escape sorrow, and, by a somewhat violent transition, to the toil of the invincible son of Zeus who must descend to Hades to fetch Cerberus. There among the souls of the dead *by the waters of Cocytus, like leaves that the northwest wind drives along the headlands of Ida*[1] *where the sheep feed,* he saw the soul of Meleager and heard the tale of the Calydonian boar-hunt and how Althaea in her passionate grief for the death of her brothers lit the brand that was the measure of her son's life:[2] *Even then, I was stripping of his arms Clymenus, whom I had overtaken outside the walls, when the Curetes fled to the goodly towers of ancient Pleuron. Then my sweet life failed me. Alas! I knew my strength was waning; and with my last breath I wept that I must leave the splendor of my youth.*[3] Here is the romantic pathos of the Ionian showing through the conventional Doric forms. Homer himself,

The legend of Meleager

[1] The comparison of men with leaves has been a commonplace with poets since the *Iliad.* Before the recovery of Bacchylides, Vergil (*Aen.* 6. 309 ff.) was the prototype of Milton's "angel forms . . . Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks in Vallombrosa."

[2] For Althaea and the brand, see Aesch. *Choeph.* 605 ff.

[3] Cp. Swinburne, *Atalanta in Calydon,* "all this body a broken barren tree That was so strong, and all this flower of life Disbranched and desecrated miserably, . . . for all my veins Fail me, and all mine ashen life burns down." It was left for Euripides to introduce the passion of Meleager for Atalanta as a factor in the legend.

when he gives another version of the Meleager legend (*Il.* IX 529 ff.), is hardly more detailed than Bacchylides, who, in fact, here and there seems to echo the Homeric passage. As an Ionian, Bacchylides is naturally without the anti-Homeric bias of Pindar.

The manifest inferiority of Bacchylides to Pindar is not due to any lack of technical knowledge or aptitude, though one may observe in passing that the connection of Hiero with Heracles and Meleager is somewhat arbitrary; it would as a rule be easier to tear the myth from its setting in an ode of Bacchylides than in an ode of Pindar. Longinus expressed admirably the difference between the two poets when he said that Bacchylides 'is faultless, and a fine writer in the smooth style,' while Pindar 'burns all before him in his swift course, but is often unaccountably dull.'[1] In spite of the beauty and ease of his language, Bacchylides is a poet of the second order, not to be ranked with the great creative artists, the masters of the grand style, who, unlike him, aimed at a perfection that was often beyond their reach.

Following on the *Epinician Odes* in the manuscript are six poems which we may regard as a selection from the dithyrambs, hymns, and paeans of Bacchylides. We might indeed, like the Alexandrians, give the whole group the general title 'dithyrambs,' since the word, even as early as Plato, had come to mean any lyric poem that imitated heroic action and told a tale. To a fifth-century poet like Bacchylides, the dithyramb implied no necessary connection with the story of Dionysus, nor was its performance restricted to the festivals held in his honor; dithyrambs were performed even at the Attic Thargelia in honor of Apollo. Of the six non-epinician lyrics, which all bear the title of the myth that they relate, three may be regarded as specifically dithyrambs, the *Fifteenth, The Sons of Antenor,* or *The Demand for Helen's Surrender;* the *Eighteenth, The Theseus;* and the *Nineteenth, The Io.* By the recovery of a type of poem hitherto known to us only in fragments, a gap in the history of Greek literature is partly filled; we are now able to

The non-epinician lyrics.

The dithyrambs

[1] *On the Sublime,* 33.

speak with some assurance of the dithyramb as it existed in the fifth century apart from tragedy. Bacchylides, unlike Pindar, observed the strophic arrangement in his dithyrambs. The saga, or rather the scene from a saga which is their main theme, has in no case any relation to Dionysus, though in the *Io* there is an abrupt allusion to Semele, his mother. The *Theseus*, by its form, stands alone among Greek lyrics. It is a dialogue between Aegeus, king of Athens, and a chorus of Athenians; the king, not knowing that Theseus is his son, describes the deeds and the appearance of the hero whose coming is dreaded by himself and by the chorus. Here then we have the only extant case of a dramatic lyric, a dialogue carried on between one speaker and the chorus, and if we could assume that the *Theseus* represents the type of dithyramb from which, as Aristotle tells us, tragedy was developed, this *Eighteenth Ode* would rank as a real contribution to the history of the drama.[1] It would mark that stage in the evolution of the play from the dithyramb when the single actor still confined the dialogue to himself and the chorus, or the leader of the chorus. In the *Io*, a poem of very slight merit, written for an Athenian contest, Bacchylides passes from the praise of Athens to the story of Io, for which he seems to have drawn on the same sources as Aeschylus in the *Prometheus Bound*. The *Seventeenth Ode*, the *Youths and Theseus*, sung at Delos in honor of Apollo, is probably a paean. Theseus, with Minos the Cretan king, is accompanying the youths and maidens whom Athens owed every year to the Minotaur. Minos insults Eriboea (who is to be, later, the mother of Aeginetan Ajax), whereupon Theseus, as the son of Poseidon, defies Minos the son of Zeus. A flash of lightning attests the protection of heaven for Minos, who challenges Theseus to leap into the sea, trusting in Poseidon, and bring up a ring that he throws into the waves. *Then the other's courage did not recoil; he stood on the shapely stern-deck and leapt, and glad*

The Theseus

The Io

Paean; The Youths and Theseus

[1] Robert in *Hermes* 33. Our ignorance of the tragic dithyramb deprives the conjecture of certainty.

was the sea to welcome him to her deep groves. . . . He came to the divine abode, and beheld with awe the far-famed daughters of Nereus, the blessed god. From their beautiful limbs flashed a light like fire, about their heads were bound fillets of woven gold, and with supple feet they danced and made their hearts glad. Then he saw in her lovely halls the dear spouse of his father, the goddess, ox-eyed Amphitrite. About him she flung a purple cloak and set on his curling hair a wondrous wreath, dark with roses, once the wedding gift of wily Aphrodite (81 ff.).

Bacchylides was not, like Pindar, a critic of the traditional saga, and there is no proof that he modified it. The story of Theseus and the ring and wreath, not known to us in literature hitherto, though it is told in Pausanias (1. 17. 2) and Hyginus (*Poet. Astron.* 2. 6), was familiar to archaeologists from the illustrations of four red-figured vases, all belonging to the fifth century; the death of Meleager is represented on an amphora of about 400 B.C., with Heracles and Cerberus on the reverse of the vase.

The same myths in fifth-century art

In his *Third Ode* Bacchylides tells the story of Croesus, king of Lydia, his generosity to the Pythian Apollo, and how in the hour of his downfall he was repaid by the intervention of the god. *In that day of despair he was not the man to abide the misery still to come, the lot of a slave. Before the brazen walls of his court he built a pyre, and mounted thereon with his faithful wife and his fair-haired daughters, weeping bitterly. Then he lifted his hands to the heaven above and cried: O, all-powerful god, where is the gratitude of heaven? where is the son of Leto? . . . So he spake and bade them set fire to the wooden pile. The maidens shrieked aloud and cast their arms about their mother; for most hateful to mortals is the death that they must see approach. But even as the gleam of the fierce fire began to spread, Zeus brought a dark cloud overhead and put out the yellow flame* (29 ff.). This version of the death of Croesus, in which he ascends the pyre by his own choice, is earlier than the story of Herodotus. It was only seventy-eight years after the fall of Sardis when

The death of Croesus

Bacchylides used this piece of history as though it had been a traditional myth. Even earlier, however, the painter of a red-figured vase, now in the Louvre, had made a picture of the voluntary sacrifice of Croesus; the *Third Ode* confirms his version of what really happened. There are other, though less interesting, cases in which the artists of the fifth century, chiefly the vase painters, may be used as illustrations to Bacchylides. But in no case does it seem likely that the painter was influenced by the poet. Bacchylides wrote no dirges, and his songs of love and wine, which were perhaps more suited to his talent than the epinician type, are lost to us.

"La facilité," said Joubert, "est opposée au sublime." The faultless style, the graceful ease of Bacchylides, his avoidance of Pindaric metaphor, would have recommended him to Voltaire, who could not tolerate the "inflated Theban." He outdid even Pindar himself in coining new epithets, especially for his dithyrambs, and the recovered poems have added over a hundred words to the dictionary. These are, for the most part, well-sounding and decorative epithets, often merely formal, but occasionally of real beauty, as when he speaks of *dark-tressed Victory*, or the *darkly-flowering sea*.

Style

Pindar carefully avoided the use of his native Boeotian dialect. But Bacchylides was an Ionian, and Ionian had long been established by epic tradition as a dialect peculiarly suited to poetry. It is therefore natural that the Dorico-Aeolic coloring of his poem should have a basis more decidedly Ionic than we find in Pindar.[1] For all this tendency he is still to be counted as a writer of 'choric,' as one is perhaps justified in calling the conventional dialect, almost as conventional as 'epic,' which was used with such slight variations by Simonides, Pindar, and Bacchylides.

Dialect

The meters of Bacchylides are, like Pindar's, dactylo-epitritic, paeonic, and logaoedic. His name is not to be found in any Attic writer, but there are echoes of his poetry in Euripides and Sopho-

[1] Schöne, *De dialecto Bacchylidea*, *Leipziger Studien*, 1899, p. 296.

cles. Horace, no doubt, had read it, and might have found Bacchylides easier than Pindar to imitate, but there is no direct proof that he did so. **Meters**

The life of TIMOTHEUS of Miletus (447–357 B.C.), the last Greek lyric poet of any importance, almost coincides with the century immediately before Alexander. Before 1903 it was impossible to appreciate his poetry from the few short fragments that were extant, three lines of triumph for a victory over his master Phrynis (*fr.* 11), a few more expressing his scorn of old-fashioned music (*fr.* 12), and some disconnected verses from the nomes. All this has an increased value since the recovery of a portion of a nome of Timotheus, a lyric narrative long known by its title only, the *Persae*. In his day two kinds of nome were performed on the cithara, the melody without words by musicians who were not necessarily poets, and the melody with words, played and sung by the citharoede, the poet who was a musician also. Of the latter type is the *Persae*. In it we see how the severe 'strain,' the nome, religious in the beginning, has become completely secularized. It has lost its stately character and is as free from metrical limitations, as emotional, as imitative, as the dithyramb. The *Persae*, one of the latest and most lucky finds of Egyptian papyri, was discovered by Borchardt in a tomb at Abusir (Busiris), where it had been left by the friends of its owner, no doubt a Greek, to be read in the underworld, part of the pathetic outfit of the dead. The whole poem, however, if he had ever possessed it, he was not to take with him. Only a part had been deposited in the grave, and much of that is now so mutilated and crumbled as to be undecipherable. Such as it is, it is the oldest Greek book now in our hands, dating probably about the middle of the fourth century B.C., so that we now possess a manuscript that Demosthenes might have read and that its author might himself have written. The last four columns of the fragment are fairly perfect and we can at last decide on the literary merit of the nome as Timotheus wrote it, and can compare this lyric version of the battle of Salamis with the tragedy of Aeschylus, the **Timotheus**

Persae, and the chapters of Herodotus that deal with the same theme. As a historical account the *Persae* of Timotheus adds nothing to the versions of Herodotus and Aeschylus. That would be too much to ask from this libretto, written at a time when the New Music had the upper hand, was no longer subordinate to the words. The *Persae* must have owed much to the musical genius of its author, and without its musical setting we can never do it full justice as a work of art. To inform, to be definite, is not the function of a libretto ; this lyrical description would serve as well for any sea-fight in which Greeks met and scattered a barbarian fleet.

When the papyrus becomes readable we are in the thick of the encounter. Already the Persians are worsted, their ships are being rammed by the Greeks and burned, their tiers of oars shorn away, their crews massacred. Even the Phrygian landsman, says Timotheus, must now take to swimming like any islander, and as the waves buffet him he threatens them in direct speech with helpless and pathetic insolence. Timotheus likes to turn from the picture of general destruction and makes the effect still more vivid by singling out the misfortunes of the individual, and now we read the ludicrous and incoherent prayers, with their mixed and barbarous dialect, of the Persian captive dragged into slavery by his Greek conqueror on the shore. Finally Xerxes, when the day is lost and all that heterogeneous host turned to flight, falls on his knees and tears his breast, crying to his followers to harness his chariot, to burn the tents and to flee with all his countless wealth which must not fall into Greek hands. In the last verses Timotheus becomes abruptly personal, in the Pindaric manner, and relates how the Spartans had expelled him because they did not appreciate the New Music. And yet, as he says in this proud apology, Terpander the Lesbian, Sparta's pride, had used as many as ten strings (a statement that must be reconciled somehow with our old notion of a seven-stringed Terpandrian cithara) and now he, Timotheus, had but followed in the steps of Orpheus, the first citharoede, and Terpander, when he exalted the glory of the

cithara by an eleventh string. By this personal reference he puts the 'seal,' the trade-mark of authorship, on his nome. The poem ends with a prayer to Apollo, the god to whom the nome was peculiarly sacred, for the welfare of Miletus, the city that had nursed the poet. Like any German or Italian libretto, this lyric is hard to translate into coherent and poetic English.

Meters

Timotheus uses an extraordinary variety of meters. Iambics predominate, but hardly a rhythm employed by the tragedians in their choral lyrics is absent from this brief nome, dochmiacs, the emotional measure of tragedy, trochees, martial cretics, dactyls, and anapaests, following one another in quick succession. There is no strophic arrangement, no responsion.[1]

Dialect

Timotheus had lived long at Athens and, like his friend Euripides, who is said to have sympathized with him and to have foretold the victory of his Music of the Future, spent his last years at the court of Archelaus, king of Macedonia, at Pella. In spite of his Ionian birth, he uses hardly more Ionic forms than an Athenian tragic poet regularly admitted as consecrated by tragic usage. The basis of his language is Attic, with a faint coloring of Aeolic. Like the poets of choral melic he loved long compound epithets; the mountain mother to whom the Persians appeal is the goddess with the 'dark-leaf-embroidered robe,' 'white-armed,' and 'golden-tressed'; the sea is, for the first time in poetry, 'emerald-haired.' He crowds his description with metaphors introduced as a rule with a too obvious effort to avoid calling anything simply by its name; oars are 'mountain-bred pines,' the 'hands' or 'feet' of the ships; the sea-water is 'rain, foaming, but not with wine.' Here we have the mint-mark of the rhetorician writing poetry.

It was about 398 B.C. (according to Wilamowitz, 398–396, at Mykale, at the Pan-Ionic festival in honor of Poseidon) that

[1] A full account of the meters of the *Persae* and an exhaustive discussion of the whole poem is to be found in the *ed. princ.* by Wilamowitz, *Timotheos, Die Perser*, Leipzig, 1903.

Timotheus first performed the *Persae*. None of his poems had a greater reputation, and as late as 207–206 B.C. it was sung again at the Nemean festival. Though he is, like Orpheus, Terpander, and Arion of Corinth, peculiarly the type of the Greek citharoede, the poet who sings to his own accompaniment a solo like the *Persae*, Timotheus was no less famous for his dithyrambs, of which a few titles survive, the *Mad Ajax*, the *Travail of Semele*, the *Scylla*. Thucydides, Euripides, and Timotheus had lived together at the court of Archelaus. When the Athenians erected a cenotaph in honor of Euripides, whose bones remained in Macedonia, an epitaph was written for it which was preserved in the *Anthology*[1] under the name of Thucydides. In one of the 'Lives' of Euripides this famous epitaph is ascribed to 'Thucydides or Timotheus.'

Isyllus

Not the least important of the finds of the archaeologists at Epidaurus in Argolis in the latter part of the nineteenth century was the poems of a writer hitherto unknown, ISYLLUS of Epidaurus. His date may be gathered from an allusion in his hexameters written in honor of Asclepius to the danger which threatened Sparta after Philip's victory at Chaeronea in 338 B.C. Isyllus, who describes his own vision of Asclepius promising to avert the danger, tells us that he was then a boy, and his *floruit* has accordingly been placed by Wilamowitz[2] at 280 B.C. The poems, which were found, engraved on stone, in the shrine of Asclepius, and were first published by Kabbadias,[3] are all in honor of Apollo and Asclepius. Two hexameter poems (17 and 23 verses) are written in conventional 'epic' with touches of the poet's native Doric. The most important is the *Paean to Apollo* (78 verses) in Ionics, a processional song which belongs to the type of choral lyric and is written in a dialect whose basis is Doric varied by the Aeolic and 'epic' coloring familiar to us from Pindar. The poems of Isyllus have a great archaeological and historical value, but as poetry they are insignificant.

[1] 7. 45. [2] *Philologische Untersuchungen* IX, Berlin, 1886.
[3] Ἐφημερὶς Ἀρχαιολογική, 1885, 66.

At Delphi, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, was found, engraved on stone, a *Paean to Dionysus*, composed, as we learn from the dedication, by Aristonous of Corinth. Its style has marked affinities with the dithyramb. The date is uncertain; Crusius conjectures that it was written not long after the close of the Peloponnesian war. It is in glyconics, twelve four-line strophes with a refrain, and celebrates the birth of Dionysus at Thebes. It was first published in 1895.[1]

The Paean of Aristonous

In the Treasury of the Athenians at Delphi were found three fragmentary cult-songs in honor of Apollo; a choral *Hymn* in the cretic metre; part of a very similar cretic *Paean;* and part of a glyconic *Hymn*. The author of these religious lyrics was probably Cleochares the Athenian, whose name was found on another inscription in the same place, a decree in his honor. The date of the poems, which were all engraved on stone, is uncertain, but was probably the third century B.C. Their dialect is the cosmopolitan, conventional dialect of choral lyric. As poetry they would count for little. But their interest is doubled by the fact that above each verse was engraved the musical notation, the musical setting being immortalized together with the lyrics. This is a valuable contribution to the obscure history of Greek music.[2]

The Delphic Hymns

Among the minor types of Greek lyric, the scolion[3] or drinking song was perfected by the Aeolians, and especially by Terpander, who is said to have remodeled and defined its music. It was not necessarily convivial in tone,

The scolion

[1] Weil in *Bull. de Corr. Hell.* 19. Crusius in *Philologus* 53.

[2] See Crusius in *Philologus* 53. Pomtow in *Philologus* 49.

[3] The exact application of the word is uncertain. Hiller would connect it with the 'crooked' or 'curved' rhythms, such as the logaoedic, in which the feet are of more than one kind. An older and less probable derivation is from the oblique (σκολιός) order of the singers. Engelbrecht's elaborate theory refers the obliquity partly to the character of the musical accompaniment, partly to the opposition of lyric and dactylic metres.

and, like the Ionian elegy, could be sentimental, or patriotic, or moralizing, ranging through every mood, from the drinking songs of Alcaeus to the famous scolion of Aristotle, *To Virtue*. There was a fashion in these songs. By the end of the fifth century it was out of date to sing a stave from Stesichorus, or Alcman, or Simonides. The fashionable guest, when, according to the etiquette, he took the branch of myrtle in his hand, was expected to sing instead some selection from the song-book called the

The Attic scolia

Attic Scolia, how *Harmodius and Aristogeiton slew the tyrant and gave equal laws to Athens* (Bergk 9), or the *Telamon* (17) or *Admetus* (21), or the beautiful anonymous scolion (28).

Drink with me and be young, love when I love, crowned as I am with flowers.
Rave with me when I rave, but be thou too, wise in my wiser hours.[1]

This species of wine-song, originally an improvisation and hardly to be distinguished in its more primitive form from a folk-song, changed as it became a literary type. When Alcaeus wrote his scolia, he had in view only one singer. With Pindar the scolion is stately, formal, and designed for a chorus. Logaoedic was the favorite meter, and four-lined strophes were common.

The scolia reflect the alternating gayety and gravity of the Greek, who, if he recalled a tale of far-off things, must point its moral even over his wine, and, when he had crowned his hair with flowers, preserved his balance with a saving reminder of the beauties of temperance. A more pathetic and human interest is

The folk-songs

attached to the fragments of Greek folk-songs. These are the echoes of the humbler and more intimate life of the people, brief ditties like the *Linus*, sung as they reaped the corn that later was ground in the mill to the tune of *Grind mill, grind; even Pittacus grinds, the king of great Mitylene* (*fr.* 43). We have even a few fragments of the nursery songs to which the children played their games :

[1] M. H. Ritchie.

Where are my roses, where are my violets, where are my beautiful parsley leaves?

Here are your roses, here are your violets, here are your beautiful parsley leaves (*fr.* 19).

Perhaps the most charming of all is the swallow-song sung by the children of Rhodes when they went begging from door to door to announce the return of spring (*fr.* 41). Every hour of toil, every hour of amusement, had its accompaniment of song. In those unnamed, undated fragments we touch, not mere literature, but something deeper and more essential to the life of the race.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE BEGINNINGS OF PROSE: THE EARLY PHILOSOPHERS

Not before the sixth century did the Greeks realize that prose writing could be an affair of art. This moment could not come until they had gradually awakened to a purely intellectual interest in their past and the explanation of the world about them, questions of fact in which the imagination had no part. For the three centuries or more that they had been familiar with the art of writing, prose had been reserved for the practical side of life, for lists of names useful for reference, records of the business of the temples, commercial and political agreements, inscriptions,[1] genealogies, legal codes, nothing that could be called literature. In the same category fall those scraps of prose in which the wisdom of the Seven Sages was crystallized, — brief warnings against excess and insolence, uttered even by tyrants such as Periander of Corinth, or Pittacus of Mitylene, men whom "the roadway of excess" had led to "the palace of wisdom."

Early prose records

The dawn of prose for the Greeks was closely connected with the awakening of a rationalistic spirit. In the sixth century the cult of Orphism, with its mystic interpretations of the religious myths and the powerful attractions of its mysteries and initiations, threatened to dominate the Greek imagination at the expense of the Greek intellect. The Theogonies of the poets, the myths with their account of the relations of gods and men, were the

[1] The earliest inscription so far recovered was written in the reign of Psammetichus II (594–589 B.C.) when some Greek mercenaries who were marching with him against Ethiopia scratched their names, like any modern tourist, on a colossal statue at Abu-Simbel in Upper Egypt.

sources of popular knowledge and belief, and the influence of the priests converted even recent history into myth that should be at once instructive and profitable. Less than a century after the death of Croesus, the story of his end had been adapted to illustrate how the gods intervene to save their servants; the relation of Croesus to Apollo is an essential feature of the Croesus myth as we find it in Bacchylides and Herodotus in the fifth century. The spirit of research awoke in the Greeks at the moment when thinkers and skeptics were most needed to challenge this authority of the poets and mystics, and the records of research are naturally in prose.

Not that the distinction was at once absolute. The first prose writer, though he ranks as a philosopher, was himself inclined to wonder-working and mysticism, while Xenophanes, the first great skeptic, wrote in verse. PHERECYDES of Syros, in the middle of the sixth century, described in prose his conception of the universe as *a great garment on which God embroidered earth and the seas and the habitations of the seas*. Only a few words of Pherecydes survive, and he was probably a theologian rather than a philosopher. If we speak first of the beginnings of philosophical prose, it is not from any certainty that the first writer of historical prose was actually later in time. Greek history and Greek philosophy arose together as manifestations of the Ionian genius for research (ἱστορίη). At first they were hardly separable. Later, when those who speculated as to the origin of the universe claimed the title of philosophers, 'lovers of knowledge,' research, or 'history,' was reserved to describe the record of past events. But the early philosophers were, in several cases, poets, while we have no record of a historian writing verse. The real break between poetry and prose must be counted to the historians; the philosophers are linked on to the poets by the form if not by the spirit of their writings.

Pherecydes

The Ionians had already perfected and fixed the type of the epic, and the Ionian elegy was spreading through Greece, when there appeared in the wealthy and pleasure-loving society of the

colonial cities the founders of European philosophy and science, the Ionian philosophers. Miletus, the most brilliant and arrogant of the coast cities, was the home of THALES (*flor. circa* 590 B.C.), one of the Seven Sages. The Milesians, curious and intelligent, admired the inventive genius of one who, as Theophrastus said, 'seemed to have lost belief in the gods.' It was the chief merit of this great, independent thinker that he grasped the unity which underlies the changing universe. 'Water,' he said, 'is the element, the first principle, of things.'

Thales of Miletus

Of the writings of Thales there is no trace, and his fellow-citizen and pupil, ANAXIMANDER, the contemporary of Phocylides, is credited with the first philosophical treatise in Greece, his book *On Nature*, of which only a phrase or two survives. He called his first principle the 'indeterminate,' undetermined, that is to say, by qualities. To be destroyed, to be absorbed again into the indeterminate, he regarded as a punishment of the 'injustice,' the selfishness, of things that had claimed individual life. ANAXIMENES, also of Miletus, working along the same lines, called his first principle 'air.' The activity of the Milesian school ended with the fall of Miletus (494 B.C.), but Greek philosophy, for the two centuries that preceded Socrates, was devoted to the solution of the Milesian problem: What single principle underlies the variety of the external world? How is the original substance transformed? How account for being and becoming, birth and death?

Anaximander

Anaximenes

Greece was to give to the world, in the course of three centuries, every known type of philosopher. In the second half of the sixth century, a citizen of Samos, PYTHAGORAS, answered these questions with a theory which sets him wholly apart from the natural philosophers of Miletus. He conceived a new, unifying principle which should limit the 'indefinite' of Anaximander. This was number. Pythagoras saw everywhere in the external world numerical analogies; qualities were for him simply quantities, numerical relations. He had the temperament of a mystic, and on its religious side, with its mystic

Pythagoras

doctrine and its theory of transmigration of the soul, his philosophy was so closely allied to Orphism that he counts as a reactionary. Apart from his theory of number, with which we are not concerned, he stands out as the first great ascetic, a philosopher who, having a distinct theory of life, imposed a certain rigid habit on himself and his disciples. Samos under the rule of Polycrates was no place for one whose life was a protest against luxury. Pythagoras migrated to Croton in Italy (*circa* 530 B.C.) and there his order flourished until his political sympathies — he was a violent oligarch — caused his unpopularity and finally his death, which was followed by a general persecution of the Pythagoreans.

Xenophanes

The sixth century closes with XENOPHANES of Colophon, who stands there protesting against all the cherished ideals of the Ionians, their religious traditions, for which he holds Hesiod and Homer to blame, their anthropomorphism, — *God is one*, he said, *and not like mortals*, — their worship of athletics, and the luxury that had made them the easy prey of the invading Persians. After the Persian conquest of Ionia, he migrated to Elea, a Phocaean colony in Italy. As the champion of reason, Xenophanes was essentially a skeptic, but his philosophy had its dogmatic side. In his book *On Nature* he taught that all things are One, that nothing comes into being or perishes. This was to be, later, the cardinal doctrine of the Eleatic school of which Xenophanes is virtually the founder. About thirty fragments of his poems survive, hexameters and elegiacs, enough to prove that he was a true poet, though he used verse as a weapon to attack poetic tradition.

Heracleitus

Pythagoras had been an ascetic, but not a solitary. The pride of HERACLEITUS of Ephesus (*flor. circa* 500 B.C.) set him apart from 'the many,' whom he scorned. His isolation was a protest against the pliancy of the Ionians, and he framed his theory of the universe in oracular prose, 'solemn, unadorned, unsweetened,' like the utterances of the Sibyl, hard for the many to understand. Behind the veil of the external world he saw, not the One, the unchanging principle of Xenophanes, but

an ever living fire, kindled and quenched according to measure, but devouring, restless, and, in the external world itself, only the transformations of fire. *All things are in motion, nothing remains. You could not step twice into the same river, for other and yet other waters are ever flowing on* (*frag.* 41–42). He could see nothing stationary, nothing that should stem the ever flowing current; apparent rest was only movement disguised, harmony the strife of opposites. Heracleitus, as became one who held his doctrine of the essential relativity of things, was a fierce pessimist, labeled by tradition 'the weeping philosopher.' His writings, of which more than a hundred fragments survive, were in prose, abrupt and obscure, in which each strong, harsh phrase sounds like the fragment of an oracle or a parable. He was the first Greek writer to express his personality in his prose style. Heracleitus and the temple of Artemis were the sole glories of Ephesus. Hence the legend that he deposited his writings within that famous shrine.

Xenophanes, said Aristotle, *looked into the broad heavens and asserted that unity is God.* His younger contemporary, PARMENIDES of Elea, envisaged the same doctrine with the eyes, not of a religious reformer and ethical poet, but of one who deals with a distinctly metaphysical conception. He is the central figure of the Eleatic school, whose main contention was the existence of 'Being,' the denial of 'Becoming.' Heracleitus had refused to distinguish a world that *is* from a world that *becomes*, and accepted only the latter. Parmenides was the first philosopher to deny the truth of those sense perceptions on whose evidence Heracleitus based his system. From all those illusions of the senses, especially from the illusion of 'motion,' he withdrew to contemplate only the cold abstraction 'Being,' complete in itself, immobile, eternal, spherical in form. He discussed the nature of being, and refuted the doctrine of flux, in a long hexameter poem of which we have about 150 verses. His enthusiasm for the great new fact that the negative has no existence transforms even the purely logical passages into a battle song of truth. *It is necessary to say and to think that Being is; for that*

Parmenides

Being is, is possible, but it is impossible that Not-Being is. This then I bid thee ponder. . . . Let not habit and long experience force thee along this path, thine eye short-sighted, thine ear and tongue confused with noise, but judge aright the proof that I speak and they have fought so long (vv. 43–44, 54–57). The disciples of Parmenides, Zeno of Elea and Melissus of Samos, who maintained the tradition of the school that motion is illusory, belong to the history of dialectic; the scanty fragments of their prose are of no importance for the history of literature.

Zeno and Melissus

The contemporaries and successors of Parmenides could either, like Zeno and Melissus, maintain and develop the Eleatic theory of unchanging Being, or the Heracleitean doctrine that nothing is permanent save change, or again they could make the effort to reconcile these two great metaphysical systems. This last was the course pursued by Empedocles, Anaxagoras, and the Atomists. They all accepted the theory that certain substances exist, unchangeable in themselves, and, in their several ways, accounted for change by the motion of these elements. Empedocles of Agrigentum in Sicily, a Dorian, the first philosopher of his race, was born in 492 B.C. He was the first to whom an element meant, as it means to ourselves, something homogeneous yet divisible, and liable to changing states. Motion accounted for these changes. To create is to combine, to destroy is to separate, the four elements, earth, air, fire, and water. What then is the force that moves? *It is Love*, answers Empedocles, *that unites them and makes them One, and then again they are sundered by Strife* (vv. 67–68). Lucretius, who modeled his own great philosophical epic on the poem of Empedocles, said that Sicily, with her long tale of glories and great men, had no son more venerable or more renowned than Empedocles; the greater pity that, like the Ionian philosophers, he too was 'wrecked on the first beginnings.'[1] Empedocles speaks like one inspired, his verses cry with a loud voice, but his fall was the greater, laments the Roman poet, for he denied the existence of a void. To the

Empedocles

[1] *De Natura Rerum* I. 729 ff.

Sicilians Empedocles seemed a prophet rather than a philosopher, as he went about among them working miracles, *an immortal god, no longer a mortal, crowned with fillets and garlands of flowers. Men follow after me in thousands, asking the road to wealth, demanding oracles, demanding cures* (vv. 355 ff.).

No ordinary ending befitted one who had claimed that he could control the weather, and lead out of Hades the spirits of the dead. Empedocles is said to have leaped into the crater of Etna, whence fate, to ridicule his pretensions, 'threw up his brazen slippers.' Greece produced only two great philosophical poems. The fragments of the hexameters of Empedocles set him far above Parmenides as a poet. Aristotle, who had no great opinion of his philosophy, and excluded him from his formal category of the poets because his verse was didactic, could not deny his poetical genius; he called him 'Homeric,' and admired his use of metaphor and his rhetorical gift.[1] Some of the finest fragments preserved are from his book *On Purifications*, in which he shows the influence of the Pythagoreans and Orphics. From them he derived his belief in transmigration, his vegetarianism, and the mysticism that clouded his speculations.

Anaxagoras

Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, the last great Ionian philosopher, wrote in the Ionic dialect his book *On Nature*, of which a few fragments are extant. For thirty years he lived in Athens as the friend and adviser of Pericles. But the Athenians, never very friendly to physical speculations, expelled Anaxagoras on a charge of impiety in 434 B.C. He retired to Lampsacus and died there. Like all philosophers after Parmenides, he denied the possibility of creation and destruction. Writing somewhat later than Empedocles, and decidedly under his influence, Anaxagoras solved the problem of 'becoming' in a way all his own. Instead of the four elements of Empedocles, he conceived of countless substances, seeds, or germs, of things, *all together*, till Mind or 'Nous' *set them in order. Mind alone is infinite, self-powerful, mixed with nothing.* It was Mind that set going

[1] Diog. Laert. 8. 57.

the blind mechanical movement which, by separating all things that are, gave them a distinct existence. This idea of an independent, efficient cause, freed from the mythology that had hampered Empedocles, — for Mind is itself only a finer substance, — was the chief contribution of Anaxagoras. His clear, impersonal, unimpassioned prose was the expression of a mind more truly scientific, more detached from ethical and political interests, than had been the case with his predecessors. Anaxagoras is the type of the contemplative philosopher.[1]

Of all the solutions that were proposed by the Greek philosophers for the problem of 'being' and 'becoming,' that of the Atomists is most nearly related to modern physical theories. Abdera, an Ionian colony on the Thracian coast opposite Thasos, was the birthplace of DEMOCRITUS, who is the true representative of the Atomic Theory among the Greeks, though his master, Leucippus, who seems to have left no writings, is regarded by Aristotle and Theophrastus as the real founder of the system. The Eleatics had denied the existence of a vacuum, and therefore of movement. The Atomists declared that, since there is movement, there must be a vacuum. *In truth*, said Democritus, *there are only atoms and a void; it is only by a convention that one speaks of sweet and bitter.* There is no objective truth in sense perception; qualitative differences arise from the number and variations of the atoms, which are of infinite variety of size and shape. The theories of Democritus, from which the modern Atomic Theory has directly descended, had little vogue in Greece and were altogether ignored by Plato. *I came to Athens and no man knew me*, says Democritus, resenting the indifference

Democritus

[1] Wilamowitz, *Herakles* 1. 25, thinks that it was as a tribute to Anaxagoras, and perhaps as an apologia for the exiled philosopher, that Euripides wrote his famous lines: *Happy the man who has acquired knowledge and understanding thereof, who does not set his heart on wronging his fellow-men, nor on unjust deeds. He fixes his gaze on the ageless order of immortal nature, and asks where it arose, and whence and how* (*fr.* 902). That he did not go on to ask *why* the world was made, and seek a final as well as an efficient cause, was the ground of Plato's reproach against Anaxagoras (*Phaedo* 97).

of Athens, the 'school of Hellas,' to the ideas of one who, as he boasted, had traveled, and investigated, and talked, more than any other man of his time. He was one who, as Aristotle said, 'had thought about everything,' and the loss of his works, which seems to have occurred somewhere between the third and fifth Christian centuries, is a serious hindrance to the study of Greek philosophy and literature. The numerous but short fragments that survive in quotation are naturally taken from the sententious passages suitable for such treatment and, no doubt, give a one-sided idea of his style. He wrote in the Ionian dialect on physics, mathematics, ethics, and poetry. Cicero more than once admires the brilliance of his style, and Dionysius[1] classes him as a writer with Plato and Aristotle.

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[1] *On the Arrangement of Words* 24.

CHAPTER IX

THE LOGOGRAPHERS: HERODOTUS

In the fragments of the early Greek philosophers we have the beginnings of dogmatic and argumentative prose. The logographers, as their name implies, wrote prose tales. It was about the middle of the sixth century that Cadmus of Miletus, and Acusilaus, the Boeotian from whom Pindar is said to have borrowed legends, wrote their *Genealogies*, versions in Ionic prose of the myths of the poets,[1] set out with some attempt at chronological order, and having this at least in common with history, that their aim was to link the past with the present, in however uncritical a fashion. Before the common interest of the Persian wars centralized the political life of Greece, there was no such thing as political history. Even Hecataeus of Miletus (*floruit* 500 B.C.), who alone of all his tribe speaks to us with a living voice, is still a logographer, not a historian. He was a much-traveled man, a fact that, in those days, was a guarantee of distinction and influence. When, in 499 B.C., Aristagoras of Miletus persuaded the Asiatic Greeks to revolt against the Persians, Hecataeus, who had seen with his own eyes the resources of Persia, warned him from the undertaking. Later, when Aristagoras had failed, Hecataeus again offered good advice, which was again ignored. A direct consequence of this revolt was the sack of Miletus in 494 B.C. In the first sentences of his *Genealogies*, in that personal announcement which has replaced the poet's invocation to the Muse, Hecataeus shows that he was not untouched by the enlightenment of which

Cadmus and Acusilaus

Hecataeus

[1] Acusilaus is said to have made a prose version of Hesiod's poems, supplemented, no doubt, by additions of his own.

Xenophanes was, at that time, the most insistent champion. *Hecataeus of Miletus thus speaks. I write as I think true, for the traditions of the Greeks seem to me manifold and laughable* (*fr.* 332). The fragment is a good example of the 'disconnected,' or non-periodic style employed by the earlier prose writers, including Herodotus himself. Hecataeus told the tale of his travels in his *Tour of the World*, for which he made a map which surpassed Anaximander's. It was from this account of the wonders of Europe and Asia that Herodotus, who was jealous of the other's wider travels and great reputation, copied some of his traveler's tales. The imitation was the more flattering to Hecataeus in that Herodotus, who prided himself on his critical spirit, slavishly reproduced the other's errors as novelties of his own, as, for example, the description of the habits of the phoenix and the crocodile. Hecataeus wrote 'pure' Ionic, affected very slightly, if at all, by literary influences. Several of the surviving fragments can be identified as the originals of certain passages in Herodotus.[1]

Among the later logographers who lived during and after the Persian wars, CHARON of Lampsacus wrote the annals of his town, and books on Persia and Greece. XANTHUS of Lydia (465–425 B.C.) wrote the story of Lydia, including the fall of Sardis. We have a few insignificant remains of both these writers.

HELLANICUS of Lesbos flourished during the Peloponnesian war, and was alive as late as the battle of Arginusae (406 B.C.), which he mentions. He was a most industrious writer, covering so much ground with his travels and his account of the Greek states and of Asia, that in spite of the criticisms of Thucydides,[2] who reproaches him with dullness and inaccuracy, he ranks next to Hecataeus in the group of logographers. What separates him from them in one important respect is the fact that he dealt with contemporary events, as well as legendary history. His *Atthis* brought down the history of Attica as late as the Peloponnesian war. It is not easy to judge of his style from the fragments in Müller's collection, which are, as a rule, rather paraphrases than

Hellanicus

[1] See Diels in *Hermes* 22.

[2] 1. 97.

direct quotations. No use of Hellanicus by Herodotus can be detected.

Herodotus

Life

HERODOTUS of Halicarnassus, the first historian of Greece, was born during the decade that separated Marathon from Salamis (490–480 B.C.). Halicarnassus, the capital of Caria, though originally a Dorian colony, was, by that time, wholly Asiatic in its interests. Its famous queen, Artemisia, as the suzerain of Persia, had fought with her five ships on the side of Xerxes at Salamis. Her grandson Lygdamis was reigning when Herodotus left his native city, perhaps, as the tradition relates, on account of some political embroilment from which he fled to Samos,[1] or, more probably, following his instinct for travel and adventure. Herodotus has nothing to say about the internal troubles of Halicarnassus, or the murder of his kinsman, the epic poet Panyasis, at the hands of Lygdamis, and, in fact, for all the incidents of his life we are reduced to late and untrustworthy evidence. It was natural, at any rate, that, as the climax of his travels in the East, he should settle for a time in Athens, then, in the middle of the fifth century, the center of Greek literary and political life. From Athens, where Sophocles wrote a poem in his honor and the citizens voted him ten talents, — the sum is so large that it shakes one's credulity in the legend, — Herodotus went with the colony of Athenians sent by Pericles to found Thurii in Italy (443 B.C.). With that colonial settlement he became so identified that Aristotle, quoting from his history, makes him call himself the 'Thurian,' though in all our manuscripts he is 'of Halicarnassus.' We do not know the year of his death, only that he was still living in 428, a man of less than sixty, but at the close of his career.

Halicarnassus had been the natural starting point of those travels in Asia Minor and the interior of Western Asia in the course of which he reached as far as Babylon. In Egypt he claimed to have

[1] Herodotus displays an acquaintance with Samos so intimate that, though the tradition of his Samian exile is untrustworthy, we may be sure that he made a long stay in the island.

visited Elephantine, opposite Assuan, and farther north was familiar with the coast of the Euxine as far as remote Colchis. Greece and the islands he knew well; Magna Graecia was for many years his home. To all these excursions he brought a singularly receptive mind, an appropriating eye, and a lively imagination fostered by a close acquaintance with the lyric and epic poetry of Greece, and tempered by the very slightest critical faculty. The instincts of the logographer and the geographer were still struggling with the new interest in the sequence of actual historical facts. The historian in him triumphed, and instead of writing the half mythical annals of his native city or a mere record of the many men whose towns he saw and whose minds he very imperfectly came to know, he chose as his main theme the story of the Graeco-Persian wars, the second great encounter of the East and West.

Travels

Like Pindar, though his native city went with the invaders, Herodotus wrote in the spirit of a true Hellene. A logographer would have lingered over the poetical myths of the first collisions of Greeks and barbarians. Herodotus dismisses these in a few paragraphs[1] and passes on to consider the rise of the kingdom of Lydia, and the striking tale of the greatness of Croesus and his fall, with the fall of Sardis, events only a century old. The alliance of Croesus with the Spartans was an opening for the account of the early history of Athens and Sparta, the legislation of Lycurgus and Solon, and the tyranny of the house of the Peisistratidae. Croesus was overthrown by Cyrus. And now we have the story of the rise of the Persian empire, the exploits of Cyrus, and the absorption by Persia of the cities of Ionia. This was so thorough that Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, could regard the Ionians and Aeolians as his 'slaves by inheritance.' Book 2 opens with the expedition of Cambyses against Egypt. Herodotus is less concerned with its fortunes than

Book 1

Book 2

[1] Aristophanes, *Acharn.* 488–494, parodies the first five brief chapters, ridiculing the earlier international quarrels which were regularly based on the carrying off of some woman, Io, Medea, or Helen.

with the recital of all the marvelous tales that he had collected in that strange and ancient land, its superstitions, temples, and gods, its curious animals, and, above all, that great and mysterious river, the Nile, on which its life depends. Book 3 contains the account of the madness and death of Cambyses and the accession of Darius, son of Hystaspes, called by his people 'the trader,' because 'he made profit of everything,' and imposed the heavy tribute which was the source of the vast royal treasure of Persia. Darius reconquered Babylon and demolished its walls. A description of Scythia and its invasion by Darius takes up the greater part of Book 4, which closes with an account of the Persian invasion of Libya, of the foundation of Cyrene by Battus, and of the curious customs of the Libyan nomadic tribes. The Persian conquests of Thrace and Macedonia, at the opening of Book 5, form a prelude to the revolt of Miletus and the fall of that city in 494 B.C. And so we are brought back at last by a wide circle to Athens and Sparta, and the causes that, about this time, embroiled them, first with their Greek neighbors and with each other, and finally with Persia. Athens, persuaded by Aristagoras of Miletus, became involved in the revolt of Ionia against Darius. The Persian king thought less, for the moment, of the Ionians, whom the Persians could always punish at their leisure, than of his vengeance on the few Greeks who were still free, and who had ventured to side with his 'hereditary slaves.'

Book 3

Book 4

Books 5–9

Herodotus had now set before his readers the condition of Asia and Ionia under the predominance of Persia, and of the chief states of Greece. From this point to the end, with certain digressions, he devotes himself to a minute and dramatic account of the struggle between Greece and Persia. The counter invasion by the Athenians, when they took Sestos in 478 B.C., he rightly regards as the real close of the war, and, with that, his history ends.

When, and where, and in what order, Herodotus wrote his history are matters of ingenious conjecture, depending wholly on the internal evidence of the work. If the Athenian vote followed

on a public reading of his book, he must have given his audience only a selection from an unfinished composition. For one thing seems fairly certain; it was during the last two decades of his life that Herodotus completed his history and gave it a revision that was apparently not meant to be final, since he refers to passages not included in the present version. In the last four Books he mentions certain incidents connected with the Peloponnesian war, which, from 431 B.C., whether at Thurii or Athens, must have been the dominant interest, a present anxiety before which even Marathon and Salamis fell into the background.

The analysis of Kirchhoff[1] shows us, even to a chapter, what portions, observing the present order, were written at Athens, at Thurii, and again at Athens on a second visit for which we have no evidence. Kirchhoff's theory rests mainly on the knowledge of Athens displayed in the earlier Books, the appearance of an interest in Magna Graecia after the first half of the third Book, and the fact that recent events are reserved to the last five Books. But he has adduced nothing that cannot be met by those who maintain that Herodotus worked over his history to the last, expanding and inserting as he gathered fresh evidence, so that we cannot say of any part that he so conceived it and so wrote it down. The question hardly affects our appreciation of the work as we have it. What we have to consider is, rather, how Herodotus collected his material, how he has worked it into a literary whole, why it is that Hecataeus and Hellanicus and the rest 'flit like shadows,' while he alone breathed a soul into his work.

Kirchhoff's theory

Herodotus classified his material as derived from what he saw with his own eyes, what he heard from others, and the conclusions of his own intelligence.[2] *I must tell the tale as it was told to me*, he says, applying the remark to his whole history, *but I am not bound to believe it all*.[3] When there were several different versions of the same tale, he chose the one that seemed to him the most probable; he occasionally gives a rationalistic explanation of a

[1] *Die Entstehungszeit des Herodotischen Geschichtswerkes*, Berlin, 1878.

[2] 2. 99. [3] 7. 152.

tradition that seems contrary to nature, as when he asserts that the oracular doves who spoke with a human voice were really women, chattering, like birds, an unknown tongue, and that the man who was said to have swum under the sea the eighty stadia from Aphetae to Artemisium really arrived in a boat. His imagination, rather than his common sense, rejects these isolated prodigies which neither adorn a tale nor illustrate the jealousy of the gods. But he plainly thought that, in the remoter past, when the relations of men and gods were closer, anything might have happened, and he would not deny the intervention of heaven in events so recent as the fall of Croesus, or of Polycrates, whose too great prosperity doomed him to an evil end. On his travels in Egypt and to the confines of Persia, he was handicapped by his ignorance of the language, and must depend on the gossip of guides, temple servants, and inferior priests who knew enough Greek to impose their wonderful tales on a credulous tourist.[1]

Credulous he was, and pardonably vain of his travels, but the question of good faith is somewhat beside the mark. There are persons, and Herodotus was one of these, whose exaggerations, however outrageous, are the result of instinct and not of calculation. The discrepancies and inaccuracies of fact in Herodotus are, probably, no more a conscious fraud than are his frequent mistakes in addition.[2]

[1] Professor Sayce, who holds extreme views as to the bad faith of Herodotus, and is his severest critic since the *Pseudo*-Plutarch, refuses to believe that the historian ascended the Nile higher than the Fayoûm; the visits to Assyria and Babylonia were, he thinks, wholly imaginary; and Herodotus was an impostor who has deceived generations of critics. See the *Introduction* to his edition of Books 1–3 (1883).

[2] For examples of these, see 3. 90–95; 5. 52–54; and especially 2. 7–9, where, in calculating the distance from the sea to Egyptian Thebes, he gives 6120 as the sum of 1500 and 4860, a pardonable error when one considers how cumbrous and imperfect was the Greek number system. The letters of the alphabet, which, like the Romans, they used as numbers, had a fixed, and not a local value as have the numbers in our system. Accuracy about dates was never a virtue of the Greeks. It was not till the third century B.C. that they adopted the reckoning by Olympiads.

Herodotus was not, of course, without documents. For the history of the Greek world he could use the poets, the lists of priests, kings, and victors in the games, and the votary inscriptions at the famous shrines. It is not easy to trace his indebtedness to the logographers. There is no proof, for instance, that he used Hellanicus, whose work on the history of Attica was apparently published before his own. Few writers who are explorers as well, have had so little chance of plagiarizing the books of other travelers. The *Tour of the World* by Hecataeus he could, however, consult; and when he found there a picturesque description, he did not hesitate to make it his own. He is justified by the event. Hecataeus, from whom he stole, together with Ctesias, the physician of Artaxerxes, who exposed his ignorance of Persia in a scathing review, hardly survive in men's memories, except in connection with Herodotus.

Thucydides, a little later, was to prove himself a scientific historian by fixing his eyes on those actions and events that affected the life of a nation. But, to Herodotus, as he walked in the streets of Memphis, or gleaned in Samos every detail of the tragic story of Polycrates, nothing seemed unimportant that threw a light on the private passions and caprices of men. He preferred to dwell with especial emphasis on the tragedies that, to his mind, must always follow when a man has overstepped the limits set for human happiness. The certain vengeance of the gods on the unpermitted insolence of men like Xerxes was always recognized by the Greeks. With Herodotus it became a fixed idea, darkening his philosophy of life. Aeschylus, with whose tragedies he must have been familiar, taught the law of the hereditary curse through which the children's teeth are set on edge for sins generations old. But the Nemesis of Herodotus lies in wait to put down the mighty from their seat out of mere intolerance of success. Only the mean or chequered estate is secure. With Horace (*Od.* 2. 10), the doctrine has fallen to a commonplace. But Herodotus lived in a world which was still learning from the fall of kings and empires that

Nemesis

"the best way to escape His ire
Is, not to seem too happy."

As the wrath of Achilles gave unity to the *Iliad*, so the story of the humbling of Persian influence holds together the nine Books of the History of Herodotus. The Persians, Athenians, and Spartans stand out as the three chief actors. But Herodotus had the epic cast of mind. His first thought was to entertain his readers, not to convey a political lesson. He was the last man to walk, like Thucydides, along the main road to his goal. He had explored all the fascinating byways, and was eager to share the curious observations with which he had been so greatly diverted. Episodes were his opportunity, and at least half the work is devoted to digressions, which, as Dionysius of Halicarnassus said,[1] give his tale the charm of variety, the Ionian breadth and warmth of the epic.

Unity

The influence of the epic is clearly seen in the manner of the speeches, which are one of the chief ornaments of his history. The words in which Croesus warns Cyrus that *there is a wheel of human fortune revolving forever, so that no man can be always fortunate*, might have been uttered by Nestor. They would have been equally appropriate on the lips of the Teiresias of Sophocles. For Herodotus could not fail to be influenced by what was then the predominant, as it was the newest, literary type. His characters often borrow the tones of the drama, and utter pathetic or tragic comments that would be admirable on the stage. When Cyrus, in spite of the warning of Croesus, has actually fallen into the pit of fortune's wheel, Tomyris, the barbarian princess of the Massagetae, insulting his corpse, cries out like a tragic heroine in her fierce grief: *I live and have conquered thee in battle, yet thou hath destroyed me, since thou hast deceived and slain my son. Thus then I make good my threat and give thee thy fill of blood.*[2]

The speeches

Athens had deeply influenced the views and temper of Herodo-

[1] *To C. Pompeius* 771. [2] 1, 214.

tus. The Persian nobles who discourse on the blessings of democracy in the third Book reflect the impressions of the historian who saw the triumph of democratic government in the Athens of Pericles. His panegyric must have flattered the pride of the Athenians, and may partly account, as Wilamowitz suggests,[1] for the extravagant reward paid to him by a vote of the people. In that debate of the Persian nobles, so like a sophistic commonplace, we may trace the influence of the study of rhetoric which was making its way at Athens, though nearly twenty years were to pass before the visit of Gorgias the Sicilian (in 427 B.C.) made the devices of rhetoric seem an essential part of Athenian education. Herodotus, it is true, wrote in the coördinated style of conversation, as opposed to the periodic style of Thucydides, and equally removed in its easy flow from the curt and abrupt manner of the logographer. But he shows the influence of the rhetoricians in his use of antithesis and in his study of effects of sound, secured by the similar endings of words, according to the favorite device of the sophists.

Style

He tells us that in his day there were as many as four dialects in use in Ionia. In spite of its Doric traditions, Ionic was certainly the language of Halicarnassus, as is proved by two inscriptions discovered by Newton. There are in Herodotus very few traces of Doric, and those only in proper names. He wrote the New Ionic, variegated by a vocabulary drawn in part from the epic and from the lyric poets, whom he knew well.[2] The division of the History into nine Books is due to the Alexandrians.

Dialect

Among the writers of Ionic prose there was one, a younger contemporary of Herodotus, whose name has a scientific rather than a literary interest. Aristotle called him 'the Great'; he was undoubtedly one of the foremost of Greek thinkers, and he can no more be omitted than Aristotle himself from a general survey of Greek

[1] *Hermes* 12.

[2] A good instance of his close knowledge of lyric poetry is the curious echo of Alcaeus (*fr.* 33) in 7. 117.

literature.

Hippocrates

Hippocrates of Cos, the Father of Medicine, was born about 460 B.C. He was a great traveler, and, like other famous men of his day, spent part of his life in Athens. There is a tradition that he went to Abdera, on a professional visit to Democritus, whose fellow-citizens suspected his sanity and were reassured by this great specialist. Wherever named, by Plato or others, Hippocrates is always treated with profound respect. One of his aphorisms, *Life is short, art is long*, which has passed into a proverb, shows the spirit of the man, who was no charlatan himself, but an honest and laborious student, the enemy of quackery and ostentation. He lived as late as the middle of the fourth century, and is said to have died at Larissa. At Cos he founded a school of medicine, whose center was the temple of Asclepius, and there, under the Ptolemies, was still flourishing a scientific school of medicine unrivaled in Greece. Hippocrates himself was an Asclepiad, one of a medical caste. Under his name have come down to us over seventy writings on medical subjects, which form a Hippocratic *corpus*. Of no part of it can we say with absolute certainty that it is from the hand of the great physician, but it represents the tradition of his school and his immediate followers. These treatises are written in literary Ionic. The dialect of his native Cos was Doric, but it was natural that Hippocrates should rise above his colonial antecedents and use that Ionic dialect which, until Athens imposed her own speech on prose writers, was the conventional instrument of didactic prose. Here, then, we have a monument of fifth and fourth century Ionic. The style shows no trace of the influence of Gorgianic rhetoric, and is as little literary in manner as the works of Aristotle. The treatises were, in fact, composed for members of the medical profession, rather than for the general public. Their writers were well read in the early Greek philosophers, especially Heracleitus and Empedocles, but, on the whole, they display a reactionary tendency against the sixth-century philosophers, a more sincere effort at scientific method and the critical spirit than was shown by the earlier physicists, whose doctrines they regard as

arbitrary and one-sided. One treatise, *On the Art*, stands out among the rest as addressed to the lay reader. It is an apology for the art of medicine, a pleading in the sophistic manner, and perhaps represents, not so much a branch of medical literature, as a type of treatise referred to by Plato in the *Sophist*,[1] when he says that every art and profession has its handbooks, written for the popular reader. Gomperz even conjectures that the tract, which has come down under the name of Hippocrates, was composed by none other than Protagoras himself, the most distinguished of all the sophists (p. 167).

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CHAPTER X

THE BEGINNINGS OF RHETORIC: THE SOPHISTS

WESTERN Greece, where, as we shall see later, Greek comedy was first developed, was the birthplace of formal rhetoric. Among all the divisions of the Greek race there was no people so akin in temperament to the Athenians as the acute and witty Sicilians, never at a loss for a repartee or a *bon mot*. They were half a century behind Athens in getting rid of their tyrants, but by 466 B.C. Syracuse was in the hands of a democracy, and now for the next fifty years the republics of Sicily were to prosper. In the early years of their freedom the Sicilians displayed a passion for going to law and an inborn talent for debate that Athens alone could surpass. It was to meet these new conditions of democratic life that there arose in Syracuse two teachers of the art of rhetoric, CORAX and his more famous pupil TISIAS. Their reputation for subtlety and captiousness is enshrined in an anecdote of a suit brought by the older man against Tisias to recover his professional fee. This was one of those situations which Plato regarded as a humorous paradox in the case of the sophists. It was illogical, he said, that men who professed to teach the virtues should prosecute their own pupils for fraud.[1] The defense of Tisias showed his training: *Either you have taught me the art of persuasion as you undertook, in which case let me persuade you not to take a fee; or you have failed to teach me, in which case I owe you nothing.* The retort of Corax, on the same lines, was a fresh dilemma. Their rhetoric had a practical aim, to provide the means of expert speech essential to success in the courts, and they wrote the first manual or 'Art' of rhetoric (τέχνη).

Corax and Tisias

[1] *Gorgias* 519 C.

Tisias went to Thurii and there taught Lysias, the Attic orator. From Thurii rhetoric traveled, in the latter half of the fifth century, to Athens. Tisias himself, according to tradition, lived for a time in Athens and taught the young Isocrates. The favorite weapon of Sicilian rhetoric, the appeal to 'the probable,' which, if one employed it skillfully, armed one against either side of the question or accusation, is used to excess by the orator Antiphon in his speech on *The Murder of Herodes*, written at Athens about 420 B.C.

For about a generation before the advent of this Sicilian influence another set of teachers had been educating the Athenians. These were the sophists, compared with whose many-sidedness Corax and Tisias must have seemed narrow specialists. The sophists were the professors of the New Education at Athens, and they are regularly condemned and defended, admired and despised, in a group. The Greeks of the fifth and fourth centuries applied the name 'sophist' to all who gave instruction in those subjects which only the rich could afford, in that higher education distrusted by the mass of the people as newfangled, but eagerly pursued by every ambitious young Athenian. Protagoras of Abdera was a sophist because he taught the art of being successful in politics; Prodicus of Ceos because he taught the nice use of words; Hippias of Elis because he taught geometry and astronomy; Tisias, too, was a sophist, a professor of rhetoric; and Socrates himself was not unfairly classed with the sophists by the Athenians who saw him teaching and arguing like the rest in public places, and could hardly be expected to put him in a separate category merely because he asked no fees and despised those who 'retailed knowledge.' The essential moral difference of his aim from theirs was disregarded even by so intelligent an observer as Aristophanes.[1]

[1] Plato's sharp distinction between philosophers and sophists was probably esoteric in his day, not adopted or grasped by outsiders. So Radermacher in *Rhein. Mus.* 52. 18. Later, one ground of distinction was the teaching of rhetoric. So, on the Parian marble, Plato is labeled 'philosopher,' Aristotle, 'sophist.'

To measure the effect of the sophistic teaching on the literature and life of Greece one must consider separately each one of those distinguished men who, coming from all quarters of Greece, made Athens the goal, and the applause of their Athenian pupils the chief distinction, of their wandering lives.

PROTAGORAS of Abdera, a Thracian town colonized by Ionians, was born about 480 B.C. He came to Athens about 450, and though he did not cease to travel and lecture in the other cities of Greece, the friendship of Pericles, the adulation of the young Athenian aristocrats, his pupils, and the admirable opportunies for displaying his talents in that brilliant society combined to make his visits to Athens frequent and prolonged. Plato, in his *Protagoras*, gives an impressive picture of the excitement caused by one of these visits, and of the brilliant and dignified sophist himself, walking to and fro in the house of the rich Callias, his host: *A train of listeners followed him, for the most part foreigners, for Protagoras draws them after him out of every city as he passes through; he charms them with his voice, like Orpheus, and they hear his accents and follow. There were some Athenians also in the group. What entertained me most was to see how clever they were in never getting in his way. When Protagoras and those abreast of him turned round, the troop of listeners divided on either side; then they wheeled and fell into the rear, always in perfect order.*[1] Plato's sketch may be trusted for the personality of Protagoras as it impressed a sober Athenian intelligence. He was a great Humanist, urbane, sensitive about his dignity, rather weak in dialectics; he tries to conceal his chagrin when Socrates proves the better man in an argument, preferring, if only Socrates would let him, to make his point that virtue can be taught, in an eloquent, sustained speech, a fable which suited his charming resonant voice better than the abrupt questions and answers to which Socrates held him down. Protagoras was a purist, and insisted on correctness of speech. Plato, who was supposed to have reproduced the very stamp and character of his language,

Protagoras

[1] *Protag.* 315 A.

makes him use a number of metaphors and a fluent, ample style, the very style for the oratory of display. He professed to teach his pupils how to talk down any specialist, but he kept his eye mainly on those who wished to be successful statesmen; to them he promised to impart 'civic virtue,' or 'excellence.' By this he meant something essentially unmoral, though not necessarily immoral, an expert knowledge how to get the better of an opponent in every sort of debate. His philosophy was Heracleitean. One who set out to train men to see and argue both sides, to make their minds flexible and receptive, naturally rejected any such absolute standard as would appeal to the followers of Parmenides. For Protagoras everything was relative to man. *Man is the measure of all things.* His agnostic utterances about the gods led to his prosecution for impiety by the Athenians, always intolerant of a professed skeptic. He fled from Athens and perished at sea. Plutarch[1] quotes a brief fragment in the Ionic dialect of Abdera, in which Protagoras describes the fortitude of Pericles during the plague at Athens. Plato in the *Sophist*[2] refers to certain treatises by Protagoras on wrestling and other subjects, 'arts' or manuals (τέχναι) such as the typical sophist composed to display that encyclopaedic knowledge which Plato found so exasperating. Such a treatise is, in fact, the apology for medicine, *On the Art*, which has come down to us among the Hippocratic writings. This tract Gomperz assigns to Protagoras, basing his theory on the appropriateness of its "dialect, style and tone" to the date and personality of Protagoras and on the similarity of its manner with the speeches of Protagoras in Plato's dialogue.[3]

The founder of grammar

Protagoras may be called the founder of grammar. He was apparently the first to distinguish the three genders by name, and he divided the form of the verb into categories that were the foundation of our moods. While the rhetoricians of the Sicilian school aimed at 'beauty of language,' Protagoras laid stress on 'correctness.'

[1] *Consol. ad Apollon.* c. 33. [2] 232 D.

[3] *Greek Thinkers* (English trans.) I 467 ff. and in *Wiener Sitzb.*, 1890.

Prodicus

Prodicus of Ceos, another of the sophists who concerned themselves with grammar, was a slightly younger contemporary of Protagoras. He was famous for his study of the precise use of synonyms, sought for *le mot propre;* one may go so far as to picture him as a forerunner of Flaubert and the rest in being possessed by what Coleridge called "the instinctive passion in the mind for one word to express one act or feeling." So we see him in Plato's good-natured satire in the *Protagoras*, playfully entreated by Socrates not to confuse the argument with his over-subtle distinctions of language (358 A), singled out from the other sophists as the one who could speak with authority about the right use of terms. He was celebrated besides for his fables, the moralizing myths which he composed to be used as commonplaces, typical illustrations in an argument. Such is the fable of *Heracles at the Crossroads*, making his famous choice between virtue and pleasure, which is preserved for us in the paraphrase by Xenophon.[1] Prodicus had at first come from Ceos on an embassy. At Athens he made a reputation as a public speaker and finally settled there, making a large income from his private pupils.

Hippias

Hippias of Elis, the contemporary of Prodicus, presented the singular case of a thinker of the Dorian race. Of the three sophists that are here considered together, and appear together in the *Protagoras*, he was the most many-sided in his interests, the polyhistor, or to use the modern term, the encyclopaedist, among them. He professed to have made all that he wore, taught astronomy and geography, was a politician rather than a professed teacher of dialectic. In the two Platonic dialogues that bear his name, the *Hippias Major* and *Minor*, he appears as a vain and theatrical improvisator. In the *Protagoras* his preference for teaching scientific subjects and the arts, rather than the art of rhetoric, is ridiculed in passing by Protagoras himself (318).

Gorgias of Leontini in Sicily (born *circa* 485 B.C.) came to

[1] *Mem.* 2. 1. 34.

Athens as an ambassador from his native town, then oppressed by her neighbor Syracuse, in 427 B.C. That embassy was an event for Greek literature. Of all the sophists Gorgias was the greatest rhetorician. His success with the Athenian public may be compared with that achieved by Carneades and his companions when they came on an embassy from Athens to Rome in 155 B.C., and alarmed Cato by the immediate popularity of their philosophical lectures with the Roman youth. Gorgias was a sort of oracle on rhetoric, a great craftsman, with a greater passion for form and a more purely artistic aim than can be detected in the other writers of his class and generation. His life covers nearly the whole of the fifth century, so that he is the contemporary of Herodotus. When he came to Athens, Aeschylus had been dead thirty years, Sophocles and Euripides were writing, Aristophanes was bringing out his first comedy. All his oratory, when he settled as a teacher in Athens, was epideictic, speeches written for display, like the *Funeral Oration* of which we have a fragment.[1] The characteristics of the Gorgianic style can be judged from this fragment. It is a *tour de force* in the dexterous use of words. Antithesis, the most natural and the earliest of all the ornaments of style, is used to excess. The line in *Rejected Addresses*

Gorgias

> "Regained the felt, and felt what he regained,"

written as a parody of Pope's antithetic style, would be perfectly fair as a parody of Gorgias. His clauses are short and precisely balanced to correspond in length, form, and sound. The effect of sound aimed at by this great virtuoso and his imitators was indeed not far removed from rhyme. The sound was echoed much as in Shakespeare's

> "And what should I do in Illyria?
> My brother he is in Elysium."

[1] It was quoted by Maximus Planudes. Walz, *Rhetores Graeci* V 548.

What was the meaning of all these efforts at rhythm and assonance and color in prose? Probably the best answer to that question lies in the words of Isocrates, *Let us see whether prose cannot, as well as verse, celebrate the virtues of men.*[1] The great achievement of the epideictic orator was that he, in the end, superseded the poet. Instead of a 'threnos' or dirge by a lyric poet, there would soon be only funeral orations; history had supplanted epic, and the panegyric was to supplant the lyrical 'encomium.'[2] Men's ears were still, however, in the fifth century, attuned to the key of poetry; they still looked to verse to give them the disinterested pleasures of literature. The sophists, therefore, when they designed to please rather than to convince, must make their prose rhythmical, and charm with a poetic vocabulary. Empedocles himself, the Sicilian poet, had taught, according to Aristotle, the arts of style, and perhaps Gorgias his pupil had caught from him some of the rhetorical devices that he employs in his poetic prose. But he owed certainly more to the tragic style, especially, perhaps, the style of Sophocles. Gorgias went too far, and made his prose metrical. He thus awakens the mistrust which, as Aristotle later pointed out, is roused by the too great artificiality of metrical prose. As a subjectivist, Gorgias shared in the sophistic reaction against the Eleatics, and wrote a treatise denying the Absolute, and asserting the rights of the individual truth. That truth one must impose on others by means of oratory. In Plato's *Gorgias* we have what is no doubt a one-sided picture of the famous sophist, with Socrates again in the leading part, outshining his opponent in argument and morality. The *Helen* and the *Palamedes*, which, besides the genuine fragment of the *Funeral Oration*, have come down to us under his name, are probably not the work of Gorgias, but of a later imitator. They are at least useful as showing what were held to be the characteristic features of the style of the founder of epideictic

[1] *Evagoras* 8.

[2] On this tendency, so fatal to poetry, see Norden, *Die griechische Kunstprosa* I 78.

oratory,[1] the forerunner, not only of the correct Isocrates and his school, but also of the Asianic manner of writing with all its perversions of style.

Gorgias wrote the Attic dialect of the tragedians, and though a Sicilian, coming from an Ionian settlement, has the distinction of giving the first impulse to the art of writing Attic prose. His conceits, of which a good instance is the famous *vultures are living graves*,[2] were echoed by certain of his disciples, such as the sophist Alcidamas, one of whose orations has survived in the same collection as the Gorgianic panegyrics. But the surer taste of the Athenian writers of prose, though they were decidedly influenced by his figures of speech and oratorical effects, found his preciosity, his over-ingenious manner, frigid and childish.

For all their variety of interests and individual differences, the sophists overlap, and have certain general characteristics. They are religious skeptics, careful speakers, thoroughly familiar with literature, aim at the cultivation of the individual rather than the advancement of science, are for the most part unmoral, and write their moral fables for practical ends. They were the first critics of the Greek poets. They mark the direction of interest at Athens towards the higher studies, met the needs of the aristocratic section of Athenian society, and were always frankly professional in their attitude to education. Besides training those who wished to become sophists, they helped to educate for politics youths like Hippocrates in the *Protagoras*, who blushed at the mere hint that he might enter their ranks, though

Influence on Greek education

[1] Blass, *Die Attische Beredsamkeit* I 72, defends the genuineness of both the *Palamedes* and the *Helen;* Croiset, *Hist. de la Litt. Gr.*, and Maass (in *Hermes* 22) accept both; Norden accepts the *Helen;* Jebb, Spengel, Egger, and Navarre reject both.

[2] On his deathbed he is reported to have said: *Sleep at last lays me with his brother Death*, and *Gladly I quit this decayed and tottering dwelling of the body*. This is a good instance of the display of the ruling passion in death. With the second utterance cp. Waller, "The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed."

he was eager to be their pupil. Xenophon tells us that Proxenus the Boeotian prepared himself for a life of action by attending the lectures of Gorgias.[1] What makes Plato's satire on their class so telling is that he recognizes their talents, concedes their charm and impressiveness, before he condemns their lack of moral earnestness and their unscientific method. They taught, as Aristotle said, not the art, but the use of the products of the art; it was as though you were to profess to teach the science of protecting the feet, and were to offer your pupils, not the rules of shoemaking, but a great variety of ready-made shoes. Plato, whose aim was to advertise the superior wisdom of Socrates, shows us the sophistic method of argument at its worst. In his dialogues you see its chicanery, its paralogisms and absurdities; how it can degenerate into mere quibbling with Euthydemus, and allure a foolish youth like Dionysodorus: *All our questions are like that,* he cries with foolish triumph, *Whichever side you take we can refute you. There is no escape.*[2]

The conservatives of Athens, looking back on the generation that fought at Marathon, were convinced of the decadence of Athenian morals and politics. They saw the rising generation flattered and excited by the new education of the sophists, and disliked their display and self-advertisement. But even Plato, with all his personal prejudices, did not suppose that a handful of professors could corrupt a whole society. To have taken that position would have been to share the stupidity of the Athenian jury which condemned Socrates on that very charge.[3]

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[1] Xen. *Anab* 2. 6. 16.

[2] *Euthydemus* 275.

[3] Grote, *History of Greece*, vol. VIII, ch. 67, has made a classic defense of the sophists.

lished in Walz, *Rhetores Graeci* V. Blass includes the *Helen* and the *Palamedes* in his ed. of Antiphon (Teubner), Leipzig, 1881. The sophistic fragments are collected in Müller's *Fragmenta Philosophorum Graec.*, Paris, 1867, vol. II. Spengel, Συναγωγὴ Τεχνῶν, Stuttgart, 1828.

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CHAPTER XI

THUCYDIDES

THUCYDIDES, son of Olorus of the Attic deme Halimus, was born, as nearly as we can calculate, within the decade 471–461 B.C. He was an Athenian citizen with all the advantages of wealth and family, connected on his mother's side with the semi-royal house of Miltiades, and the owner of gold mines in Thrace. The single anecdote of his youth relates that, being with his father at a reading of his history by Herodotus, Thucydides was so excited by admiration that he shed tears. Whereupon Herodotus complimented the father on his son's generous appreciation and the talent that such emotion implied. He is said to have been a pupil of the orator Antiphon who taught rhetoric, and he certainly came under the influence of the leaders of the intellectual society that gathered about Pericles. Anaxagoras and Protagoras may have played their part in forming his mind, and though Thucydides went into exile three years after the arrival of Gorgias in Athens (427), there is no doubt that he too felt the charm of the Gorgianic manner of speech, and profited by his lessons in the possibilities of Attic prose. At the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war he was a man of about forty, well-fitted to understand its causes and follow its course. When the plague devastated Athens in the second year of the war (430) Thucydides was one of the few who recovered from its attack. In 424 we find him a general in command of seven ships, off the island of Thasos, opposite the coast of Thrace. Brasidas, the Spartan general, threatened Amphipolis, and Thucydides was ordered to protect the town. He arrived too late, Amphipolis was lost to the Athenians, and Thucydides could only save for

Life

Exile

them Eion, the harbor town. The Athenians were always prompt to punish an unsuccessful general. *For twenty years*, he writes, *I was banished from my country after I held the command at Amphipolis, and, associating with both sides, with the Peloponnesians quite as much as with the Athenians, because of my exile, I was thus enabled to watch quietly the course of events.*[1]

The late 'Life' of Thucydides by Marcellinus (fifth century A.D.) adds the detail that it was the demagogue Cleon who caused his exile. But the outline, the bare fact of exile, is all that we can safely accept. Where he passed the next twenty years, whether he returned to Athens in 403, where and how he died, are not recorded by any trustworthy authority. He probably visited Sicily and acquired the detailed knowledge of Syracuse that he displays in the account of the Sicilian expedition. He may, as Wilamowitz thinks, have lived for a time, and died, at the court of Archelaus, king of Macedonia, at Pella.[2] Euripides, we know, was there, and Thucydides is credited with a beautiful and noble epitaph on the tragic poet.[3] The date of his death is unknown. It was at least not later than 396 B.C., and may well have fallen some years earlier.

His *History of the Peloponnesian War* was divided by the Alexandrians into eight Books. In the first he gives a short survey of the early conditions of Greece, the beginnings of the Greek navies, and reviews briefly the fifty years between the Persian and the Peloponnesian wars, the causes of the hostility between Athens and Sparta, and the negotiations before the great struggle began. Books 2–4 and part of 5 describe the ten years, counting by summers and winters, of the first period of the war, in which Archidamus of Sparta plays a leading part. Then comes a full account of the peace of Nicias in 421 B.C. and the siege and sack of Melos by the Athenians. In Books 6–7, Thucydides tells the tale of the Sicilian

Scope of his history

[1] 5. 26.

[2] *Hermes* 12. For the arguments against this view, see Gilbert in *Philologus* 38.

[3] *Anth. Pal.* 7. 45.

Expedition. This was in itself a separate war, no longer between Athens and Sparta, but it proved to be a turning-point in the Peloponnesian war as a whole, since that struggle of two years exhausted the resources of Athens and gave the Spartans courage to seize Deceleia and enter on the final stage of the conflict described in Book 8. The first seven Books show signs of careful revision, of that polishing and filing which Dionysius of Halicarnassus detected in the work. Thucydides died before he could revise the eighth Book; one sign of its incompleteness is the fact that it contains no speeches, none of those harangues and dialogues that are so striking a feature of the other seven.

If Thucydides had not actually shed tears of envious admiration at the triumphs of Herodotus, he must at least have witnessed those triumphs. He was moved to build a monument of Attic prose that should rival that Ionian masterpiece, but he desired a very different success. His audience must be prepared to do without the tales and myths[1] which had given Herodotus so pleasing a confidence that he could entertain where he could not instruct. To Thucydides the *History* of Herodotus must have seemed an irresponsible tale. His own was to be very different from that, *a possession forever, not the rhetorical triumph of an hour*. There might, as he contemptuously admitted, be less mere pleasure for the hearer. Herodotus had crowded his background and laid on the colors rich and thick; Thucydides was to grave his austere lesson deep in the minds of the few who would profit by it, the select intelligences for which he wrote and on which he counted in the future. He can trust such an intelligence to see the law that governs all these actions, to find it in the essential character of man, eternally the same under all the draping of conventions and circumstances. Though he does not name his predecessors, the logographers, or Herodotus, he breaks with their traditions in the first sentences, dismissing all the mythical history of Greece as of no great account since the scale was so small, the people poor, feeble,

Comparison with Herodotus

[1] I. 22.

and isolated, fit for no great enterprise. Even the Trojan war, for all the embroidery of the poets, betrays the poverty of Greek resources, the general insignificance. Greater than any previous war, more memorable even than the repulse of Persia, was to be this duel of Ionians and Dorians, this suicidal settlement of old scores in which he saw that all Hellas and many barbarians would take sides. For seven or eight years he played an active part in it, suffered from the pestilence that came in its train, heard many of the speeches that he reports, and later, in his exile, still watched, when he could not share, the fight. That was the way to write history, as it was written later by Xenophon and Caesar, by men who had been a part, and no small part, of the events.

Herodotus had written a panegyric of Greek civilization as opposed to barbarian. Thucydides does not write for the glory of Athens, though she is the protagonist, the heroine, of his impartial tale. He shows you the conflict of race pride; the Corinthians appeal to the Lacedaemonians not to let an Ionian city oppress Dorians; the Dorian temper and practice were pitted against the Ionian. '*We* are not educated out of respecting the laws,' says the Spartan king Archidamus: '*we* have not grown insolent in prosperity, *we* are not so over-intelligent that we can only criticise and not act; we think our neighbors may be as clever as ourselves.'[1] That was not the Ionian way at Athens. The intelligence of the Athenians was their pride, the intelligence that made them despise the enemy, the superior cleverness against which they were warned by Cleon, 'the most violent of the citizens.' 'You all long to be orators,' he tells them, 'you worship what is new; you are always changing your minds and you think that you are wiser than the laws.'[2] Thucydides is far from pointing the moral of this contrast. "Listen to no intellectual argument," said De Quincey. "One argument there is, only one there is of philosophic value . . . an argument drawn from the moral nature of man. The rest are dust and ashes." Thucydides had no illusions about the moral nature of man.

Ionians versus Dorians

[1] 1. 84. [2] 3. 37–38.

For a generation he had watched the Greeks at every crisis of the war, and had found them ready, at the first hint of impunity or of personal danger, to defy every law and convention. In the plague at Athens he had observed their blind terror harden to a callous eagerness to seize the pleasure of the moment at any cost to others. When the Thracians entered Mycalessus and massacred even the helpless school children, he remarks that such are the passions of barbarians let loose. But he could not fail to see that the Athenians were no less bloodthirsty when they murdered and enslaved whole populations of their revolted allies, as at Melos and Scione. The bad faith of the Plataeans in putting to death their Theban prisoners[1] was matched by the treachery of Athenians like Phrynichus the general, willing to betray his country to satisfy a personal grudge.[2] At Corcyra men first saw the worst excesses of revolution, the ties of blood and the scruples of religion forgotten. But Thucydides explains that all these atrocities seemed abnormal only because they were the first of the kind. This, he said, is the nature of man; in the like circumstances he will always be ready to defy all laws and conventions, human and divine. In the fatal desire of the Athenians to conquer Sicily he saw the irrational side of man getting the upper hand. There were few evils, he thought, that could not be averted by intelligence. To have keen perceptions, to be prudent, to reason, to calculate, to penetrate motives, that is the triumph of the human being. With Thucydides the Ionian love of intelligence becomes a sort of obsession. Where Herodotus had seen the hand of God punishing the wrong-doer, Thucydides sees a lack of perception in the man, a miscalculation which can stultify all the conventional virtues, as in the case of the virtuous and unfortunate general, Nicias. The oracles he treats with scant respect and observed that the only case in which they were justified was in their declaration that the war would last thrice nine years.[3]

Conception of human nature

The Speeches have been called the soul of his history. They

[1] 2. 5. [2] 8. 50. [3] 5. 26.

are all in the first seven Books and number forty-one, besides two Dialogues, of the Melians and Athenians in the fifth, and of Archidamus and the Plataeans in the second Book.

The Speeches

There is one purely epideictic speech, the famous *Funeral Oration* of Pericles in the second Book. Thucydides did not profess to give the exact words of the speaker whom he reports. What he aims at is to give the situation, to show the national or personal *êthos*, the character and temperament as it came out in debate, to give a *précis* of a long discussion, making one or two of the chief speakers on both sides the mouthpiece of the rest. Thucydides was writing in a generation whose chief intellectual interest was rhetoric. At Athens history was made, the fate of peoples and individuals decided, in debate. The only other Attic prose writer of his own earlier time, Antiphon, that 'master of expression,' was a professional writer of speeches. Thucydides was himself deeply influenced by rhetoricians, and he no doubt regarded the speeches as the chief ornament of his work. They were his opportunity for characterization. In them he shows us how the Spartans and Athenians estimated themselves and how they were envisaged by each other. It was the most dramatic and effective way of making the reader feel the force of their motives, the national traditions, and the weakness and strength of the national character of each. The typical Corinthian, speaking at Sparta, shows us vividly the attitude of the nearer cities to the Athenians, those 'restless neighbors' as they were called in the Greek proverb, how they feared their untiring ambition, their thirst for expansion, so dangerous to the smaller states.[1] The speech of Cleon, the popular Athenian politician, is probably typical of the sort of scolding that the Athenians enjoyed from a favorite speaker in those days when there was no scolding by popular preachers from the pulpit or by the press. Provided only that it was cleverly done, as Cleon could do it, he might attack even the sacred principle of democracy, and tell the Athenians with impunity that he never thought a democracy could manage

[1] I. 120.

an empire, and now he is sure of it when he sees them always longing for an ideal state, but without the strength of purpose to carry out their imperial destiny.[1] The great *Funeral Speech* in the second Book was delivered by Pericles over those who first fell in the war. The ceremony was one that was repeated from time to time during the war, and on this occasion was held in honor of only fifteen dead. It is the finest panegyric that was ever composed on Athens, and the noblest of the few *Epitaphioi* or *Funeral Speeches* that have come down to us. In this speech and the two others by Pericles,[2] we have a report from one who was almost certainly present of that powerful unwritten oratory with which Pericles charmed and governed the Athenian democracy for some thirty years.[3]

Though he had worked in narrower and deeper lines than Herodotus, Thucydides is not without digressions. Into his account of the mutilation of the Hermae at the opening of the Sicilian war he inserts the tale of the conspiracy of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, with some details of the family history of the Peisistratidae. The story of the treachery of Pausanias in the first Book is an episode not essential to the narrative. But with Thucydides a digression is always sober history, a sincere attempt to clear up some incident connected, even if remotely, with the matter in hand. He never gossips. In the private life of Pericles or another he takes no interest, and does not even mention Aspasia, about whose career at Athens Herodotus would have had so much to relate. But even the severer unity of Thucydides has been attacked. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who naturally preferred the manner of his countryman Herodotus, reproached Thucydides with breaking up his history, and making it read like the work of an annalist by his regular division by winters and summers. Dionysius was a rhetorician, and it was hard for such a one to admire the Thucydidean manner, at once austere and obscure. But he did not fail to appreciate his narrative power,

[1] 3. 37–40. [2] 1. 140–144; 2. 60–64.

[3] On the eloquence of Pericles see *infra*, Chapter XIX.

those wonderful descriptions of fights, which Cicero said were like a battle-song — the moving and terrible story in the seventh Book of the retreat of Nicias from Syracuse with his army of forty thousand men, their misery *too deep for tears*, as Thucydides says, their slow destruction by the Syracusans. Most striking of all is the account in the second Book of the plague at Athens. It is by such passages as this that Thucydides has earned his title as 'the most pathetic' of historians. He was faithful to his ideal of giving general incidents which were bound, in such another case, to recur. He was so successful in this that every description of a pestilence, since his, has seemed to imitate him or to fall short of his intensity. Lucretius[1] translated part of the passage into verse, misunderstanding the original, here and there, and adding medical details that weaken the picture. Following him, Vergil in the *Georgics*,[2] Ovid in the *Metamorphoses*,[3] Seneca in the *Oedipus*,[4] echo Thucydides. Boccaccio describes the fourteenth-century plague at Florence, Manzoni that of Milan in the seventeenth century, Defoe tells the tale of the Black Death in London; no one of them has superseded the eight chapters in which Thucydides describes the degradation of body and soul that are inevitable to all such visitations. It is in such passages that he shows himself capable of the deepest pathos, a pathos that is never sentimental.

All praise, but few enjoy, Thucydides. He was isolated among Attic prose writers, profoundly original, an autocrat in the use of language, though he owed much to the sophists. He has so impressed his readers with his historical sense and his careful use of evidence and of such documents, chiefly the texts of treaties, as he had at his command, that, among Greek writers, he shares with Aristotle, and with Aristotle only, the honor of being taken on trust and quoted by scholars as an unimpeachable authority. But his style has repelled many critics since Dionysius. It defied imitation and soon seemed archaic. Thucydides is thoroughly sophisticated, thoroughly conscious that he is writing Attic prose,

[1] 6. 1138–1231. [2] 3. 478–566. [3] 7. 523–613. [4] 110–205.

conversant with all the devices of the new rhetoric. He offended the taste of the later purists by the frequent use of words, phrases, and constructions that were more suitable to poetry. That was part of his archaism. His is the 'austere style,' a high and carefully chosen diction, with a nice discrimination of synonyms and a tendency to definition which he may have learned from Prodicus. He had a fondness for antithesis that strikes one as almost a frivolity in an author of his cast, and, here and there, he writes very much in the manner of Gorgias himself.[1] But in spite of his love of symmetry his style is marked by sudden and unaccountable variations of construction, and his sentences often end in an anacoluthon. He delights in intricacy, disregards the natural order of words, often holding up a word in order to give it a special emphasis, and when, as frequently happens, his constructions are far-fetched, it is not always clear that he has secured any advantage by the effort. The long periods of Thucydides with their long rhythms make his style impressive, but he condenses his thought too much for clearness, overloads a sentence with a crowd of ideas, is always 'treading on his own heels,' as was said of him by Quintilian. The tension and the concentration are too severe, so that the famous austere style often ends in harshness and obscurity, and becomes a puzzle even to Greek critics. His dialect, the older literary Attic, is varied by Ionic forms.

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CHAPTER XII

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE DRAMA : AESCHYLUS

Dionysus, the divinity to whom the Greek drama was from the first consecrated, was the youngest of the Greek gods. In the Homeric Poems he is one of the minor deities, mentioned twice in the *Iliad* and twice in the *Odyssey*, but only in passing, and never as one who plays a conspicuous part among the gods themselves. His adventures are, in all the legends, less grotesque, more human, than those of the greater divinities. We can dimly trace the path by which he entered Greece, a Phrygian god who had to struggle for recognition, whose worship was opposed in Thrace and again as he passed southward in Boeotia, till at last he is established in Attica and at Athens. To the common people Dionysus was peculiarly dear. They were all in a sense his priests, since all could take an active part in his worship. For them he was the giver of life, especially the life of the vine in their vine-growing country, though oil and corn were no less his children. His was the spring festival in the villages when the country people met to open the wine of last year and to welcome the signs of renewed life in the fresh leaves and flowers. His too was the winter festival in December, when the vine growers rejoiced at the ending of their toil. That was the gayer side of the worship of Dionysus as the triumphant god of vigorous life, the ever young,[1] the god of enthusiasm. But his other aspect was certainly not forgotten. He was the god of ecstasy, but he was also the god of sorrows, half human in that his mother was mortal, and to be

[1] Tu puer aeternus, tu formosissimus. Ov. *Met.* 4. 18.

pitied, as one pitied Demeter, because both were acquainted with grief. In the tangle of legends that grew up about Dionysus there is a strong element of pathos. He could be imprisoned by a mortal, as in the tale of Pentheus of Thebes, which Euripides uses in the *Bacchae*, or driven to plunge into the sea and take refuge in the bosom of Thetis when he was chased by the impious Lycurgus, as Homer describes in the *Iliad*.[1] So it was that the whole range of human emotion was appropriate to his worship, wild grief and wild gayety expressed in turn the ardor of his worshipers, and both tragedy and comedy were derived from the choral dance in his honor.

This was the 'dithyramb,' a word whose precise meaning is unknown. Of the many ingenious derivations due to the Greek poets and modern commentators, that which explains least seems the most probable; 'dithurambos' is connected with 'thriambos,' an obscure epithet of the god, and the compound means a 'song' or 'dance' in honor of Dionysus. The dithyramb is first mentioned in literature by Archilochus (*fr.* 77), in the seventh century, and for him it meant simply a song addressed to Dionysus and inspired by wine. As the cult of the Phrygian god passed over to Greece it found a congenial home in Naxos, while on the mainland it was always associated with Thebes and Corinth. To the latter city the dithyramb had perhaps been brought by Arion of Lesbos (p. 108) when he came to the court of Periander the Corinthian tyrant (625–585 B.C.). At any rate, according to the tradition, Arion was the first to train and remodel the goat choruses from which Attic tragedy was developed, and on this fact the Corinthians based their claim to the invention of tragedy. In these choruses the worshipers of Dionysus, disguised as goats (tragoi), danced and sang the dithyramb to the music of the Phrygian flute. We know nothing precise about the innovation of Arion. It may have been he who, bringing order into the dithyrambic choruses, set the number of the dancers at fifty, a convention that was always retained. The primitive cult song of Diony-

[1] VI 132.

sus now suffered two distinct transformations. In the hands of the writers of choral melic it became the literary dithyramb as we find it in Pindar and Bacchylides, and flourished alongside of tragedy, even at Athens. Of its transformation into the drama Athens has the full credit. No other literary type is so peculiarly a reflection of the Athenian genius and Athenian culture. The Dorian dithyramb as remodeled by Arion was transplanted to Athens in the sixth century about the time when the court of Peisistratus became the center of the artistic life of Greece.

Thespis

Thespis, who may be called the founder of Greek tragedy, has held his ground in spite of the silence of Aristotle, from whose *Poetics* is derived almost all that every scholar accepts as the history of the beginnings of tragedy. *A younger race reshapes all this; and infinite time will make many more inventions yet; but mine are mine.* So says the epitaph of Thespis, written by the Alexandrian poet Dioscorides in the second century B.C. Thespis was born in the first years of the sixth century, in Attica, in the village of Icaria, not far from Marathon, a place traditionally associated with the worship of Dionysus. His great contribution was that he took the decisive step from the dithyramb to the drama and introduced an actor who was detached from the chorus to play a separate part.[1] The name of this performer, the 'answerer' (ὑποκριτής), indicates how close was still his connection with the chorus, how subordinate were his spoken interludes to the lyrical part of the performance. The older Dionysiac festival of the Wine press (Lenaea) was already established at Athens. Peisistratus instituted the Great Dionysia of the City, a March festival which henceforth was the official season for the performance, first of dithyrambs, and later of tragedy full-blown. It must have been under his patronage that, in 534 B.C., Thespis first played his tragedies at the City Dionysia, and we may accept that date as marking the recognition by the Athenian state of the

[1] The *Theseus* of Bacchylides (18) is a lyric dialogue between King Aegeus and the chorus, and, if we regard the poem as a dithyramb, illustrates this step in the evolution of the drama.

primitive form of Attic tragedy.[1] It was therefore only ten years before the birth of Aeschylus that the Dorian goat song, *tragoedia*, became dramatic. Greek tragedy, however, never wholly discarded the Dorian stamp. To the last the Athenian dramatist wrote his choruses in the Dorian dialect.[2]

While the dithyramb was still purely choral there had already appeared the tendency to introduce a wider range of interest than the adventures of Dionysus. In the first quarter of the sixth century Cleisthenes, the tyrant of Sicyon, had forbidden his subjects to sing their goat choruses in honour of Adrastus the Argive hero, and had restored to Dionysus his rights. 'What has this to do with Dionysus?' was the complaint of certain conservative audiences, when they saw the god superseded by the heroes of the saga in such a play as the *Funeral Games of Pelias*, said to be by Thespis.

The gap of about a generation between the activity of Thespis and the first successes of Aeschylus is filled by three dramatists.

Choerilus

CHOERILUS, a younger contemporary of Thespis, was an Athenian who produced his first play in the 64th Olympiad (524–521 B.C.) and was thirteen times a victor in the tragic competitions which had already been organized at Athens. Except a stray metaphor in which he calls rocks and rivers the *bones and veins of earth*, we have no remains of his numerous plays. If we may so interpret a very vague tradition in which Choerilus was called 'a king among the satyrs,' he was peculiarly successful in the satyric drama. He lived to compete with Aeschylus.

With the new interest of legends other than the Dionysiac, came the gradual elimination of the satyrs from the tragic chorus and their replacement by performers more dignified and more appro-

[1] Horace seems to have confused tragedy with comedy when he makes Thespis a strolling player who performed his plays on a cart and smeared his face with wine lees. *Ars Poet.* 275.

[2] Christ points out that in the Indian drama also, two dialects, Sanscrit and Prakrit, were used.

priate to the heroic legend. But the satyrs were not banished from the tragic stage. By a convention that was accepted in the generation of Thespis or soon after, the tragic poet must offer for competition a tetralogy, a set of four plays consisting of a tragic trilogy and a satyric afterpiece. The satyric drama was a concession partly to tradition, partly to the popular demand for the coarser and less serious element that had been a marked feature of the dithyramb. Tragedy, as Horace says, must condescend to this sport with satyrs as a grave matron is induced on a feast day to throw aside her dignity and dance with the rest.[1]

Pratinas

The poet who was credited with the introduction of the satyric afterpiece and who was, at any rate, especially distinguished for his satyric dramas, was PRATINAS, a Dorian of the Peloponnesus, who followed the current to Athens. It was on the occasion of his competition with Aeschylus in 499 that the wooden seats of the theater are said to have broken down. We have a few lyrical fragments of Pratinas which may have been taken from his plays. In the longest of these he protests against the fifth-century tendency to allow the flute accompaniment of a lyric to encroach upon the words.

Phrynichus

PHRYNICHUS, the son of Polyphradmon, an Athenian, the most distinguished of the predecessors of Aeschylus, won his first tragic victory in 512 B.C. There can have been very little action in his plays, since at first he used but one actor, and even after his adoption of a second actor from Aeschylus his effects were probably not such as would appeal to a modern audience as dramatic. The chorus was still the protagonist in his *Phoenissae*, which described the effect on the Persians of the news of their defeat at Salamis; for this play he used two actors (*circa* 476 B.C.). The more famous *Sack of Miletus* was performed with a single actor soon after the fall of the city in 494. Herodotus tells us that the Athenians were so affected by this picture of the misfortunes of their allies, which they regarded

[1] *Ars Poet.* 230. "The contemptuous fourth, the frank Concession to mere mortal levity." Browning, *Aristophanes' Apology*.

as a domestic calamity for Athens, that the whole theater burst into tears and Phrynichus was fined a thousand drachmae for reminding them of their responsibility and their grief. They could not risk such emotional influences on their public policy, and Athenian etiquette henceforth was decidedly hostile to historical plays, though Phrynichus himself, in his *Phoenissae*, and Aeschylus a little later, with his *Persae*, proved that the Athenians could safely be regaled with the griefs and humiliation of Persia. Phrynichus was famous for his lyrical effects, which were long popular at Athens, though they were old-fashioned when Aristophanes wrote the *Wasps* (422 B.C.). A fragment of one of these melodies was closely imitated by Gray: —

> "O'er her warm cheek and rising bosom move
> The bloom of young Desire, and purple light of Love."[1]

The theater

The sixth-century theater of Dionysus at Athens in which Thespis and his juniors played their tragedies consisted of a round dancing-place, the orchestra, such as must have been used from the beginning by dithyrambic choruses, with an altar (thymele) in the center for sacrifices to the god. There was no stage, and it is probable that the Thespian actor, if he wished to distinguish himself from the chorus, delivered his part from the step of the altar. Early in the fifth century a green room was provided for changes of dress, the tent or 'scene' which cut off a segment of the circle of the orchestra. This was soon faced by a proscenium, the background of the play, which was usually the façade of a two-storied palace or temple.[2] All this, like the seats of the spectators, was apparently of wood and constructed for temporary use until, in the fourth century, when the great triumphs of the Athenian drama were over, Lycurgus built a 'scene' of stone and erected stone seats for the

[1] *Progress of Poesy* 40.

[2] Wilamowitz in *Hermes* 21 thinks that this conventional proscenium was not used in the earlier extant plays of Aeschylus, and conjectures that it was introduced in the decade 468–458 B.C.

spectators, and those thrones of Pentelic marble which are still the chief ornament of the ruined theater of Dionysus at Athens.[1]

Was there a raised stage for the actors in front of the proscenium, or were they, in the days of the classical drama, on the same level as the chorus in the orchestra? That is the question which for the last fifteen years has divided archaeologists. There are no remains early enough to be used as evidence, either for the stage buildings or the stage of the fifth century B.C. Of the Hellenistic theater we know much, but of the theater of the fifth century, the setting of the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, we know little more than can be gathered from the plays themselves. Dörpfeld's theory that in the fifth century actors and chorus stood on the same level in the orchestra, seemed likely ten years ago to transform our whole conception of the scenic setting of a play at Athens. But the evidence of the extant dramas, since it has been used by both sides in support of views that are directly opposed, is hardly more decisive than the archaeological remains. On the side of those who reject a fifth-century stage it may be said that it is not for us, with our fixed ideas of the aesthetic propriety of a stage, to insist that the audience of Aeschylus would not have tolerated a certain amount of confusion of chorus and actors.[2] Aristotle thought that, without the aid of the eye, the hearer of a tragedy should be made to thrill with horror and pity at what takes place,[3] and for this no raised stage was essential. What was the height of the fifth-century stage, if stage there was, what were its dimensions,

The stage

[1] Dörpfeld, *Das Griechische Theater*, 1896.

[2] For the open-air performance of the *Antigone* of Sophocles at Athens, in April, 1905, under the immediate supervision of Dörpfeld, no stage was used. "The result," writes Mr. Louis Dyer in the *Nation*, May 11, 1905, "has made no converts. The altar blocked the view, the actors were constantly confused with the chorus, while the entrances and exits were ineffective." At the performance of *Agamemnon* at Harvard (1906) there was no stage, and there, at any rate, the effect was admirable.

[3] *Poetics* 14. "Who hears the poem, therefore, sees the play." Browning, *Balaustion's Adventure*.

whether steps or an inclined plane rendered possible those scenes in which chorus and actors undoubtedly mingle, these are still open questions.

Developments

The development of the Athenian drama was steady and rapid. About seventy years after Thespis produced his uncouth pieces, half dithyrambs, half tragedies, the high-water mark of tragic style had been reached in the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus, the masterpiece of Greek tragedy, and the *Prometheus Bound*, whose superhuman personages disdain the solid ground, had taxed the ingenuity of the stage machinist. It is not easy to allot to each tragedian his exact contribution to the mechanical contrivances of the theater and the structure of the play. Thespis is credited with the invention of masks, Phrynichus with the introduction of female characters and the prologue, Aeschylus with the second actor and several stage devices, including the 'machine' for raising the actor in the air, and the 'eccyclema,' the low stage which could be rolled forward out of the door in the proscenium when it was necessary, as in the *Agamemnon*, to show a *tableau* of the interior of a house. Sophocles introduced the third actor and scene painting.

Trochaic tetrameter seems to have been the earliest meter of tragic dialogue and was used to the last in moments of especial excitement. But it was very early superseded by iambic trimeter, the meter that is most nearly related to prose speech. In the choruses there was admitted the widest variety of rhythms derived from choral lyric, the numbers changing with the changing passions, and this is especially true of the plays of Aeschylus, for whom the chorus might still, as in the earliest drama, the *Suppliants*, seem more important than the actors. One by one, in the half century that followed the *début* of Thespis, all these things were added to tragedy, and we may be sure that the first and most difficult steps are to be credited to the creative genius of Aeschylus. Aristotle, it is true, in the tantalising Fourth Chapter of the *Poetics*, which is our only unquestioned authority for the beginning of the drama, says little of Aeschylus, and declines

to take the trouble to describe in detail the gradual elaboration of the scenic effects which he regards as the least artistic part of tragedy. But he tells us that it was Aeschylus who curtailed the chorus, and we can trace in his extant plays that gradual subordination of the lyrical part which was necessary before there could be genuine tragedy, with delineation of character and dramatic interest.

Aeschylus

Aeschylus, the son of Euphorion, was born in the deme Eleusis in 525 B.C. His father belonged to the class of the Eupatridae, the old nobility of Attica, and may have held some priestly office at Eleusis. We know nothing of the education of Aeschylus, but we may suppose that, as Aristophanes makes him say of himself in the *Frogs* (886), his soul was nourished in the atmosphere of the Eleusinian worship of Demeter. He first competed in tragedy against Pratinas and Choerilus in 499, but was defeated. His career as actor and poet must have been interrupted by the Persian wars, since he fought at Marathon (490 B.C.) and again, ten years later, at Salamis and Plataea. Yet we find him winning the first of his thirteen tragic victories in 484, and for the next twenty-five years he continued to write for the Athenian stage. There is a tradition that, on one occasion, his audience suspected that Aeschylus was revealing in his play the mysteries of Demeter, and for the moment his life was in danger. He was formally tried on the charge of impiety by the Areopagus, and was acquitted. An invitation to the court of Hiero at Syracuse was sure to follow on an artistic success at Athens. Aeschylus paid more than one visit to Sicily, and in his later years, though he did not cease to produce his tragedies at Athens, he chose to live in Sicily, possibly preferring, as some say, not to witness the triumphs of his younger rival Sophocles, who was placed before him in the tragic competition of 468 B.C., or because the odium of the charge of impiety had not been lived down. At Gela in Sicily he died in 456, and there his tomb was shown. The epitaph on it is said to have been written by himself, and this is the more likely because it says not a word about his profession or his successes as a poet, but boasts of his bravery at Marathon against the 'long-haired Medes.'

Of the eighty plays whose titles are recorded under the name of Aeschylus, seven have survived, together with considerable fragments. It was Aeschylus, according to Aristotle, who first curtailed the choral part and made the dialogue the protagonist of the drama. In the earliest extant play, however, the interest still centers in a crowd. The date of the *Suppliants* is not known. It has been placed as late as 461, when the Athenians were considering an Argive alliance, and as early as 492, when they were dreading an invasion of Orientals as insolent as the sons of Aegyptus. In view of the primitive structure of the play, the earlier date is the more probable. The fifty daughters of Danaus, who have fled from Egypt to Argos, the home of their ancestress, Io, are at once the heroines and the chorus. Their father, who though he speaks iambics is practically a coryphaeus, and Pelasgus, the King of Argos, appear merely as the protectors of the chorus, and, apart from their share of the dialogue, the lyrics in which the Danaids express their terror, and despair, and gratitude, take up half of the play. The *Suppliants* has no prologue, and is itself a prologue, as the first play of a trilogy that must have dealt with the rest of the legend, the fulfillment of the threat of war with which the play closes, the forced marriage of the Danaids with their pursuing cousins, and the slaughter on the wedding night. In the last play of the trilogy the interest probably centered in one who for us is the chief figure in the whole legend, Hypermnestra, *splendide mendax* in that she broke her promise to slay Lynceus, her husband, and so become the ancestress of Danae, Perseus, and Heracles himself, as Aeschylus relates in the *Prometheus Bound*.

The Suppliants

Since the rest of the trilogy is lost, as well as the *Cypria*, the cyclic epic in which was told the story of Lynceus, Hypermnestra depends for her place in literature on Horace,[1] Ovid,[2] and Chaucer, who included her in his *Legend of Good Women*. In the treatment of her devotion, her punishment, and her final acquittal by the Argives, Aeschylus had an opportunity for situations less spec-

[1] *Od.* 3. 11. [2] *Heroides* 14.

tacular and more dramatic than the series of *tableaux* in the *Suppliants*. In the other remains of the Aeschylean trilogies, as in the dramas of Sophocles and Euripides, the dithyrambic chorus of fifty is broken up and distributed among the plays. In the *Suppliants*, which is a cantata rather than a tragedy, and perhaps in the lost plays of this trilogy, the original number of the chorus is retained, according to the requirements of the story. Two actors only are used, since Danaus, with some loss of verisimilitude, leaves the stage at a critical moment, to reappear as the herald.

The *Persae* was performed in 472 at Athens, and again at Syracuse, at the request of Hiero.[1] According to the tradition, the other plays of the trilogy were the lost *Phineus* and *Glaucus*, with the satyric drama *Prometheus* to complete the tetralogy. The *Persae* is the only extant Greek play that deals with contemporary history. It is a picture of the humiliation of the Persians after Salamis, the Asiatic reflection of the Athenian triumph. The scene is laid at the court of Xerxes, and the heroine of the piece is his mother Atossa, the widow of Darius. The chorus is composed of Persian elders. By far the most striking part of the dialogue is given to the Messenger, who, with an effect that is epic rather than dramatic, describes to Atossa the destruction of the flower of the youth of Persia at Salamis and the ruin of her son. 'Where is this Athens?' asks the unhappy queen, and the Messenger's answer is an admission of the bravery and good fortune of the Athenians doubly effective from the lips of an Oriental. Atossa receives the crushing account of her misfortunes with one of those silences that Aeschylus made so impressive.[2] So, too, Cassandra in the *Agamemnon* shrinks 'like a wild thing newly trapped' and gazes in stubborn silence at Clytemnestra in whom

The Persae

[1] Wilamowitz in *Hermes* 32 conjectures that the *Persae* was written and first acted at Syracuse. It was, he thinks, a play independent of the convention of a trilogy, being itself a sort of miniature trilogy, with three loosely connected acts.

[2] Cp. "I like your silence, it the more shows off your wonder." *Winter's Tale.*

she alone can see the murderess of Agamemnon. So Prometheus in the *Prometheus Bound* utters not a word to his tormentors. It was a peculiarly Aeschylean device to secure by this means the strange and deep impression of what is not spoken, of the "silent griefs which cut the heartstrings," and was so frequent in his plays that it is ridiculed by Euripides in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, performed more than sixty years after the *Persae*. *Nay, but I liked that silence*, says Dionysus, *and got as much pleasure from it as from many of the speeches nowadays*. Dionysus, who in the comedy of Aristophanes represents the preference of the Athenian conservatives for Aeschylus, the poet of the generation of Marathon, declared that he enjoyed also that dramatic moment, the acme of interest in the play, when the ghost of Darius rose from his tomb in the orchestra to warn and advise Atossa and the chorus. Only two actors were used, so that Atossa must leave the scene before the entrance of Xerxes, whose loud and abject grief was the crowning triumph for the Athenian audience.

The *Seven Against Thebes* (467 B.C.) belongs to the trilogy of the Theban cycle. The play opens at the point in the story when the two sons of Oedipus, fulfilling their father's curse, are about to decide by arms their rivalry for the rule of Thebes. Eteocles defends the city from within, while Polynices, as one of the Seven Chiefs led by Adrastus, threatens him from without. The rôle of the chorus of terrified Theban maidens, and the beautiful lyrics in which they sing of their fears and the horrors of a sacked city, are a conspicuous feature. The long speeches of the Messenger, describing with epic fullness the besieging warriors, their arms, and the devices on their shields, are the most impressive in the play, which, as Aristophanes said, is 'brimful of the spirit of war.' For all that, Eteocles is a true tragic hero, and the dramatic interest centers in the encounter of the doomed brothers. This interest reaches its acme when, as Eteocles distributes by lot the seven Theban leaders who are to defend their seven gates against the seven chiefs, it appears that fate has left to him the seventh gate at which he must face Poly-

The Seven Against Thebes

nices. Here, as throughout the play, the responsibility is thrown on the gods. The tragedy closes with the tidings of the death of the brothers, and the laments of Antigone and Ismene. The resolve of Antigone to bury her brother Polynices, in defiance of the city's edict, foreshadowed a play which, some twenty-five years later, gave an immortal picture of that devotion and defiance, the *Antigone* of Sophocles.[1] The *Seven Against Thebes* was preceded by the lost *Laius* and the *Oedipus*, with the *Sphinx* as a satyric afterpiece.

The date of the *Prometheus Bound* is uncertain. The almost certain use of three actors, Prometheus, Hephaestus, and Kratos, who personifies Force, the elaborate mechanism necessary for staging the play, and the decided subordination of the chorus, are evidence of its lateness. One other clew is to be found in the play itself. In his *First Pythian*, composed in 470, Pindar celebrated Hiero's victory over the Etruscans at Cymé, his success in the chariot race, and the foundation of the new city of Etna (476 B.C.), and described the eruption of Etna which began in 479 and had not yet ceased. Even Aeschylus could not improve on Pindar's imagery, and he clearly echoes in his *Prometheus Bound* the lyric poet's description of those 'rivers of fire' which the monster Typho, imprisoned beneath Etna, flung up as a sign of his wrath and despair. The play, then, falls later than 470, and it is safe to say that its structure is more mature than that of the *Persae* (472 B.C.). But, like the three earlier tragedies that survive, the *Prometheus* represents a single situation, there is no reversal of fortune due to discovery or recognition, no knot is untied, and, at the close, the will of Prometheus is still defiantly opposed to the will of Zeus.

The Prometheus Bound

In a piece where all is superhuman, where as in a "miracle play" or "mystery" the ordinary limits of time and space are

[1] The *Seven Against Thebes* was the last play of the trilogy, and there is good reason to believe with Wilamowitz, *Sitzb. d. preuss. Ak.*, 1903, that the whole final scene in our version, with its indication that the story is "to be continued," is a later, non-Aeschylean, addition.

lightly set aside, the prodigies seem less prodigious. Such a play is the *Prometheus*. The scene is laid in the Scythian desert, 'remote from man.'[1] Thither Hephaestus, reluctant to injure a brother god, and Kratos (Force), eager to abet the cruel violence of Zeus, bring Prometheus, and fasten him with chains and bolts to a high peak that overlooks the sea. Prometheus is the prototype of all revolted and "Titanic" spirits. The Byrons and Shelleys greet him as the champion of oppressed mankind, one opposed like themselves to all the forces of tyranny. The sin that Prometheus must expiate is his too great love of the human race. He stole fire from heaven and with that gift bestowed on man all the arts and safeguards of life. He helped men to be too clever, a sin no more to be forgiven by the jealous gods of Greece than the insolence of being too happy. One remembers how, in the *Odyssey*, Poseidon punished the Phaeacians for making their ships too swift and too safe, how Horace in the *Odes* reflects the Greek feeling that the boats which first invaded the "inviolable main" were 'impious.' If Aeschylus could see a modern airship, he would say that the punishment of Icarus who dared to aspire to 'wings not granted to mortal men' had failed in its lesson. If he could see men following their pleasures "by the light of the Terror that Flieth," and "domesticating the wildfire of the storm," he would say that the original sin of the Titan had been thrown into the shade.[2] The punishment of Prometheus,

> "A silent suffering and intense;
> The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
> All that the proud can feel of pain,"[3]

[1] *Prometheus Bound* 1–2. Apollonius of Rhodes, in the Alexandrian age, introduces Prometheus and his tortures as one of the sights of Colchis. From his *Argonautica* was probably derived the tradition which makes the Caucasus rather than Scythia the scene of the Titan's sufferings.

[2] Cp. the chorus on the rise of man, Sophocles, *Antigone* 332 ff. This attitude to the overbold inventor was not confined to the Greeks; cp. *Job* 38. "Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?" Verg. *Ecl.* 4. 32. Ovid, *Met.* 1. 94. Tibullus 1. 3.

[3] Byron, *Prometheus.*

might seem to be too severe for the offense, but those who think so are reminded (by J. A. Symonds) that Adam and Eve forfeited the happiness of the whole human race by gathering fruit from a forbidden tree.

The very forces of nature are moved by the sufferings of Prometheus. The sea, at whose 'countless laughing ripples' he gazes, sends her Ocean nymphs to comfort him with their fragrant presence. They form the chorus, and in lyrics unusually brief for Aeschylus, utter their gentle advice, sympathy, and expostulation. In the meantime comes the father of the Oceanides, Oceanus himself, the typical Aeschylean old man, prudent to a fault, and wholly antipathetic to the Titanic spirit of revolt. But the deuteragonist of the piece is Io. Grotesque and pathetic in her shape of a hunted cow, she is a fresh proof of the cruelty of Zeus. Her prominence in the play, and the recital of her wanderings by Prometheus, are justified by the fact that, after thirteen generations, a son of her line, Heracles the deliverer, will set the Titan free. Her fate and the fate of her children Prometheus prophesies to Io, and when she rushes out, driven by the gadfly, he announces to the chorus that he holds the secret of the coming downfall of Zeus. His boast is followed by the instant arrival of Hermes with terrible threats if he should refuse to save Zeus by revealing his secret. The play ends in a cloud of dust and fire, a confusion of sky and sea, in which Prometheus has the last word: *O Aether that bringest round to all men the light of day, thou seest my sufferings and my wrongs!*

Of the second play of the trilogy, the *Prometheus Unbound*, we have a few disjointed fragments, not enough to show how Aeschylus managed that reconciliation of the Champion with the Oppressor which was so repugnant to Shelley. Heracles the deliverer must have played a chief part, and there was, no doubt, some modification of the tyrannical attitude of Zeus, some development of the moral character of a god whose supremacy was now assured. Time could teach even Zeus. And so Prometheus takes his place in literature as the martyr who suffered for

The Prometheus Unbound

men and was at last reconciled with Heaven.[1] So he appears at the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, whose fatal union with Zeus he has averted, a guest who in the famous description of Catullus *still wore the faded scars of that ancient suffering*.[2]

Shelley filled his *Prometheus Unbound* with ideas and language derived from the *Prometheus Bound* of Aeschylus. But he scorned the tradition of a compromise that should leave Zeus supreme over men. In his drama, Zeus marries Thetis and begets a child mightier than himself, the Demogorgon who hurls him into the bottomless void, while Man is left triumphant, with his foot on the threshold of a second Golden Age.

The third play of the Aeschylean trilogy was probably *Prometheus the Fire-Bearer*, and celebrated the institution of the Prometheia, a festival with torch races held at Athens in honor of the Titan.

> "It is deserted now, but once it bore
> Thy name, Prometheus; there the emulous youths
> Bore to thy honor through the divine gloom
> The lamp which was thine emblem."

If we reject, with most modern scholars, the older theory which placed the *Fire-Bearer* first, we may class this lost play with that other drama of reconciliation, the *Eumenides*, in which Aeschylus again brought round to Athens the conclusion of a saga cycle.

The *Oresteia*, drawn from the Trojan saga, is the only Greek trilogy extant, and it is the one of all others that we should have chosen to survive. The other extant plays of Aeschylus, except the *Persae*, which has apparently a peculiar independence, are at a disadvantage because they survive as disjointed parts of a whole that we are unable to envisage. But the *Agamemnon*, the *Choephori* (*Libation-Bearers*), and the *Eumenides* are like three great

[1] Pindar in his *Seventh Isthmian*, written probably in 478 B.C., makes Themis avert the fall of Zeus; she advises the gods to give Thetis to Peleus: *Let her wed a mortal and see her son die in war. Then they nodded assent with immortal eyelids, and the fruit of her speech was not left to wither.*

[2] 64. 296.

acts, each complete in itself, but held together by a larger unity. In the first, Agamemnon is murdered by Clytemnestra on the first day of his return home from Troy; the second is a picture of the revenge of Orestes, who slays his guilty mother and her lover Aegisthus, and is hunted by the Furies, the Erinnyes who avenge a mother's blood; in the third we see the reconciliation of Orestes with the Furies. They accept the verdict of heaven in his favor, and, changing their name and character, are to be known hereafter as the Eumenides, the Gracious Ones whose shrine is beneath the Areopagus. For the main features of the story Aeschylus may have drawn on the lost cyclic epics, the *Cypria* and the *Returns*, and owed much, no doubt, to the lost lyric of Stesichorus, the *Oresteia*.

Of the three dramas of murder, revenge, and remorse, the *Agamemnon* is incomparably the best. The scene is laid at Argos before the palace of Atreus, stained with the sins of the race, and from the first the atmosphere of the play is sinister. The first speaker is the watchman whom Clytemnestra has posted on the palace roof to look for the beacon fires that are to announce the fall of Troy. Like the chorus throughout, he is oppressed by a vague sense that anything new, even the home-coming of Agamemnon, must be a new misfortune. He hints at danger from within, declaring that, could the stones of the house speak, they would cry out against one who hoped that good might yet come to the line of Atreus. Agamemnon belongs to one of those families to which dreadful things happen. His great-grandfather, the founder of the house, was Tantalus, to whose career every varying version of the legend adds some fresh crime against the gods. Pelops, son of Tantalus and father of Atreus, was cursed by Myrtilus, the dying victim of his treachery; Atreus, the father of Agamemnon, repeating one of the crimes of Tantalus, had served up to his brother Thyestes the flesh of that brother's sons, the 'Thyestean banquet.' Aegisthus, son of Thyestes, who, as Clytemnestra's lover, plots with her the death of Agamemnon, has this, his private score, to pay off. So the story goes on, crime added to

The Agamemnon

crime and curse to curse with every fresh generation. Agamemnon, who inherited this burden of sin, had sacrificed his blameless child Iphigeneia that the ships might sail from Aulis to bring back the false Helen. Of all the sins of this doomed race this sacrifice has most deeply impressed the poets. Lucretius,[1] when he wished to show how fear of the gods led to evil deeds (Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum !) before Epicurus freed men from their superstition, chose to describe the sacrifice of Iphigeneia the sinless, by sinful hands; and in the first great chorus of the *Agamemnon*, the old men of Argos, when they see with anxious eyes that Clytemnestra has made all the altars of the city blaze with gifts, are diverted from their own fears by the thought of that other sacrificial altar at which Agamemnon 'had the heart to become the slayer of his child.' Their song is a prelude to the entrance of Clytemnestra, who now comes to announce that the city of Priam has fallen. Her description of the 'courier-flame' of the eight beacon fires that flashed the news of the Greek triumph from Mount Ida in the Troad across Lemnos, Athos, Euboea, Boeotia, and the Megarid, till the watchman saw its gleam on Mount Arachnaeus in Argolis, has been finely imitated by Macaulay in the *Armada*.[2] Every descriptive speech and lyric in the *Agamemnon* is a masterpiece. After another long chorus with a wonderful picture of the grief of Menelaus robbed of Helen, the herald of Agamemnon enters on the left, crowned with olive, and proclaims the near approach of the king. Yet his tidings are not all of triumph. A storm has scattered the Argive host on the home voyage, Menelaus has disappeared, and the ship of Agamemnon alone has sailed safely across the Aegean Sea which 'flowers with dead Greeks and their wrecked timbers.' Aeschylus seems to have intended to secure by the unusually long choruses of the *Agamemnon* an illu-

[1] *De Natura Rerum* I. 84 ff.

[2] "Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale of Trent,
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's embattled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle."

sion of lapse of time highly necessary in a play where the incidents that, in the legend, followed the fall of Troy, the storm-driven voyage of Agamemnon and his arrival at the palace, were crowded into the first eight hundred lines, and were, for the spectator, apparently limited by a single revolution of the sun. This was a foreshortening of the action not uncommon in the Greek drama, whose spectators were trained to ignore the ordinary conditions of time. After a third long choral lyric, a splendid recital of the woes that Paris and Helen brought on Troy, chariots arrive from the harbor bringing the king and the Trojan spoils, and among them the chosen flower of all the booty, the 'army's gift,' Cassandra, the daughter of Priam, Apollo's priestess. Agamemnon is a weary and disillusioned man who has paid dearly for his victory, and has learned from his ten years before Troy to be suspicious of all seeming loyalty and friendship. He hears with impatience his wife's lengthy greeting, and choosing, at last, the risk of divine jealousy rather than debate with her, consents to tread on the purple carpet that she has laid down. He goes into the palace

"Treading the purple calmly to his death."

Clytemnestra follows him, turning first to cry, *Zeus, Zeus, fulfillment is thine; fulfill my prayer!* The scene between Cassandra and the chorus, when Clytemnestra, after a vain attempt to extort an answer from the dumb prophetess, has left them together, is one of the finest in the Greek drama. Cassandra,

> "That strange-eyed, spirit-wounded, strange-tongued slave
> There questing houndlike where the roofs red-wet
> Reeked as a wet red grave,"[1]

stands before the palace and appeals to the statue of Apollo her destroyer, who has brought her to this 'human slaughterhouse.' She recalls in a vision all the monstrous crimes of the house of Tantalus, sees, like the soothsayer Theoclymenus in the *Odyssey*, the blood of coming murder on the floors and walls, and foretells

[1] Swinburne, *On the Cliffs*.

the new snare, the worst crime of all, which is being prepared within. But it is her doom to be disbelieved to the last. The Argive elders understand all her allusions to past misfortunes, but, when she cries aloud for some one to save Agamemnon from his queen, they think her distraught. Her prophecy of her own end they are at last forced to comprehend, if not to believe: —

Ah, Ah, the doom (thou knowest whence rang that wail)
Of the shrill nightingale!
(From whose wild lips thou knowest that wail was thrown)
For round about her have the great gods cast
A wing-borne body, and clothed her close and fast
With a sweet life that hath no part in moan.
But me, for me (how hadst thou heart to hear?)
Remains a sundering with the two-edged spear.[1]

At last Cassandra flings from her the chaplet and the prophetic wand that had brought her only mockery, and, with a final obscure hint of the revenge of Orestes, passes into the palace. On the steps she pauses to utter a last lament for the destiny of man: —

Enough of life. . . .
Alas for human fortunes! For in prosperity
They are a shadow; and if misfortune falls
A wet sponge with a touch blots out the drawing.

The death-cry of Agamemnon, twice repeated, throws the chorus into that confusion and helpless discussion regularly imposed upon it at any crisis by the conventions of the Greek drama. And soon the eccyclema is rolled forward, disclosing the interior of the house with the corpse of Agamemnon laid beside that of Cassandra, and Clytemnestra exulting over them. No tragic figure must be wholly wicked, and even Clytemnestra, the 'pitiless woman' of Greek legend, does not sin from mere depravity. Aeschylus allows her to plead in her own defense two motives for the murder of Agamemnon, the sacrifice of Iphigeneia, whom he put to death 'as lightly as one slays a sheep or a goat,'

[1] Swinburne's paraphrase in *On the Cliffs*.

and her jealousy of Cassandra. In the midst of the threats of the chorus and her defiant answers, Aegisthus, the weaker accomplice, enters and rejoices in his personal vengeance on the son of Atreus. He is taunted with weakness by the Argive elders, who threaten him with the vengeance of Orestes, and their undignified wrangling is ended and the play closed by the scornful words of Clytemnestra: *Flatter not so their foolish yelpings. Thou and I as lords of this house will order all things well.*

In the *Choephori*, which is, like *Hamlet*, a drama of revenge, are three main episodes: the recognition of the home-coming Orestes and his sister Electra, the death of Clytemnestra at her son's hands, and the last scene, in which the madness of remorse, the counter revenge of the Furies, drives Orestes from Argos. For the recognition Aeschylus uses the reasoning from signs, a device that was classed by Aristotle among the less artistic of its kind. Electra, coming to see the tomb of her father and to offer libations, is attended by a chorus of maidens, Trojan captives who had formed part of the spoil of Agamemnon. Their lyrics take up nearly a third of the play. On the tomb she sees a lock of hair like her own, and, near it, footprints which, since they resemble hers in size and shape, can have been made only by Orestes. This last touch is a clear failure to recognize the ridiculous on the part of one whose footing in the sublime was usually so secure. Aristophanes ridiculed the device in the *Clouds* (536 ff.), some thirty years later, and Euripides in his *Electra* (413 B. C.) parodies the whole passage of the *Choephori*, making Electra herself reject the suggestion that a brother's hair and his footprints would be likely to resemble those of his sister. Following the recognition is a long 'kommos' of nearly three hundred lines in which Orestes and Electra exchange lamentations with the chorus. But through it all Aeschylus never forgets that the motive of the play is revenge. For him the pathos of Electra's situation and her joy at the reunion with Orestes are dominated, as they are not to the same extent in the plays of Sophocles and Euripides, by the scheme for

The Choephori

vengeance. By a false story of his own death Orestes wins his way into the palace, and soon the spectators hear from within the death-cry of Aegisthus. In the uproar that follows, Clytemnestra seizes the axe with which she had slain Agamemnon, and confronts her son, whose sword is still dripping with the blood of Aegisthus. In this encounter of mother and son the dramatic interest of the whole trilogy reaches its highest point. Clytemnestra in the *Agamemnon* had shown no sign of her guilty passion for Aegisthus, though the chorus had not failed to taunt her with it. Aeschylus could boast in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes that he had never sinned against the dramatic proprieties by bringing on the stage 'a woman in love.' But at this moment, when Clytemnestra learns of the death of Aegisthus from her son, she cannot restrain her grief for the loss of her lover and champion. *Thou lovest the man?* cries Orestes in fury, *thou shalt lie with him in the same grave.* Orestes is like Hamlet in his mission of revenge, unlike him in that he pursues his purpose. Only once he hesitates and appeals to Pylades, who for the rest of the play is a mute personage, but for this once breaks silence as the mouthpiece of Apollo to warn his friend that the god must be obeyed and his father avenged. After that Orestes puts aside his mother's appeals for mercy, and drives her before him into the palace that she may die by the side of Aegisthus. He is next seen standing on the eccyclema by the dead bodies of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra, as, in the *Agamemnon*, his mother had stood over Cassandra and the king. In his hand Orestes holds the blood-stained robe with which she had entangled Agamemnon in the bath, before she slew him, and raises it to the light, that the sun himself, seeing that cruel net, may bear witness to the justice of the deed. But it is only for a few moments that Orestes can reason clearly in his own defense,

> "Streaked with his mother's blood, but striving hard
> To tell the story ere his reason goes." [1]

He feels the approaching madness of remorse and sees the

[1] Browning, *Pauline.*

Gorgon shapes of the Furies, their dusky robes, their dishevelled hair coiled with snakes, and the blood of hatred dripping from their eyes as they swarm about their prey. *Ye cannot see them, but I can*, he cries to the chorus, *They drive me out and I must flee*. And so he rushes from the scene, *scelerum Furiis agitatus Orestes*, turning his face to the shrine of Apollo at Delphi where he had been promised protection.

The whole interest of the last play of the *Oresteia*, the *Eumenides*, is centered in Orestes, *facto pius et sceleratus eodem*. The other actors are divinities, Apollo and Athene, who come forward in his defense. The chorus is composed of his grim pursuers, the Furies. The scene opens at Delphi before the temple of Apollo, where Orestes has fled for refuge. The Furies, who have been cast into a deep sleep by Apollo, lie on the steps of the central altar at which Orestes crouches exhausted by his long flight. After a prologue by the priestess, the *tableau* within the temple is disclosed, probably by the eccyclema. While the Furies still sleep, Apollo sends away Orestes, under escort of Hermes, to a shrine that is destined to be the goal of his wanderings, the temple of Athene at Athens. The ghost of Clytemnestra, stung by his escape, rises and upbraids the sleeping Furies. When the play was produced, the aspect of the chorus created something like a panic in the theater, and it became a reproach to Aeschylus that he had added horror to horror, had been the first to clothe the Furies in black and to put snakes in their hair.[1] And now Clytemnestra stood among them, a shamed and abhorred ghost, pointing to her wounds, and calling on them not to let their prey escape. They answer her with mutterings in their sleep and at last awake to find that the quarry has stolen away. Apollo drives them like unclean things from his shrine, and the scene changes to Athens, to the temple of Athene

The Eumenides

[1] Dante reproduced the Aeschylean Furies *stained with blood, who had the limbs of women and their action, and were girt with greenest hydras. Little serpents and cerastes they had for hair, wherewith their cruel temples were bound.* *Inferno*, Canto 9, Norton's translation.

on the Acropolis. There Orestes has come, after long years of suffering, not, he pleads, as one red-handed and unpurged, but with his guilt faded, the stain of blood grown dull on his hands, and himself worn out by long travel in alien ways and among alien men. The Furies crowd in the orchestra, and, as he clings to the statue of Athene, they sing a terrible chant of vengeance that no tears or prayers can avert. Athene refuses to decide between her own suppliant and divinities so powerful as the Furies. At this point Aeschylus imports into the play a historical interest which was doubtless far more impressive to the Athenian spectator than to ourselves. Athene summons twelve Athenian citizens to try the case of Orestes and the Furies. At the time when the play was produced, under the *régime* of Pericles, the council of the Areopagus, the most conservative institution at Athens, had been deprived of all its political power on the motion of Ephialtes, and had been shelved as an aristocratic body whose functions were incompatible with general democracy. But there had been left to the Areopagus its jurisdiction in cases of homicide such as was tried at its first sitting in the *Eumenides*. What Aeschylus thought of the reform of Ephialtes is not indicated in the play. But in this picture of the founding of the court by Athene he expressed the conservative Athenian attitude to the venerable council. After the cross-examination of Orestes by the chorus, and the testimony of Apollo in his defense, the votes of the twelve judges are found to be equal. This was a moment when a god might well intervene to cut the knot, as Apollo had intervened when Orestes had to choose between the Erinnyes of a father unavenged and the Erinnyes of a mother slain.[1] Athene accordingly gives the casting vote for Orestes, who departs to Argos. The goddess is left to appease the wrath of the chorus:

> "yea thou knowest O mother Night,
> Keen as that cry from thy strange children sent
> Wherewith the Athenian judgment-shrine was rent,
> For wrath that all their wrath was vainly spent,

[1] *Choeph.* 283.

Their wrath for wrong made right
By justice in her own divine despite
That bade pass forth unblamed
The sinless matricide and unashamed."[1]

But Athene changes their curses on Athens into blessings, and offers them a shrine beneath the Areopagus. So they become the Eumenides, the 'Gracious Ones,' Athenian for evermore, and the play ends with their solemn procession towards the Areopagus, led by Athene. In a later Greek play, the *Oedipus at Colonus*, they were to be shown as established deities of the sacred grove at Colonus near Athens.

The satyric afterpiece of the *Oresteia* was the lost *Proteus*. That 'old man of the sea,' surrounded by his flock of seals, had prophesied to Menelaus in the *Odyssey* his wanderings, before the gods would let him come home to Sparta, and had told him of the murder of Agamemnon by Aegisthus in his halls. Aeschylus may well have drawn on that episode to connect Proteus with the tale of the house of Atreus.

The saga

Aeschylus said, or is reported to have said, that his plays were 'slices from the great banquet of Homer.' Nothing in those plays, and in the whole of Greek tragedy which followed his lead, is more striking than the domination of the heroic saga. Never was the saga, that precious inheritance of the Greeks, so deeply significant, so full of meaning as in the drama. The great storehouse of the saga was, of course, the epic. When Aeschylus admitted his debt to Homer he had in mind, not only the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, but the *Cypria* and the *Thebais*, which in his generation men still ascribed to Homer. Their story of the siege of Troy and the " dark sorrows of the line of Thebes," preferred before all others by the tragedians, formed the very substance of the drama, as they were indispensable to the choral lyric of Simonides, Pindar, and Bacchylides. So necessary were the myths to the vitality of tragedy, that, when the feeling for the saga died out among the Greeks, tragedy, too, withered at

[1] Swinburne, *On The Cliffs.*

the root. In the purely Attic legends Aeschylus seems to have taken small interest, and, though Io has her place in the *Prometheus*, he never brought her descendant Heracles on the stage. The great convulsions, the ruinous passions, that he chose to depict had not for their setting violet-crowned Athens. Remoteness was an added beauty and an added terror; the desolation of Scythia, on the verge of the world, gave an effect of somber grandeur to the *Prometheus*. For the Promethean trilogy he had drawn on the Theogonies; the saga of the Argonauts furnished him with several plays; the Dionysus myth inspired ten tragedies, among them the lost *Lycurgeia*, the trilogy in which Aeschylus dramatized the infatuation and punishment of Lycurgus, king of the Edones, who, like Pentheus of Thebes, had resisted the cult of Dionysus, had chased the Maenads, and driven the god himself to take refuge in the sea.[1] It is hard to determine how far Aeschylus modified the legends which he found in the cyclic epics and Stesichorus. The rôle of Electra, which was to become so essential a part of the Orestes legend in tragedy, he may well have derived from the *Oresteia* of Stesichorus. Homer had given, in the *Odyssey*, two versions of the death of Agamemnon. In the earlier Books, Aegisthus is said to have planned and executed the murder, and Clytemnestra is barely mentioned. In the eleventh Book the shade of Agamemnon tells how his wife helped Aegisthus to slay him and how she murdered Cassandra. The conception of Clytemnestra as the pitiless protagonist, a Lady Macbeth unshaken by remorse, was not original with Aeschylus; Pindar, nearly twenty years before the *Oresteia*, had accused her strong hands and ruthless heart of the murder of Agamemnon and Cassandra. The watchman who, in the *Odyssey*, was set by Aegisthus to spy out and report the coming of the king, is borrowed by Aeschylus, but he is transformed into a faithful servant of Agamemnon who watches for the beacon.

The finest tragedies of Aeschylus were concerned with the legends of certain great houses whose monstrous crimes had laid

[1] Cp. *Iliad* VI 130 and Sophocles, *Antigone* 955.

their descendants under an inherited curse. The blossoming of that 'dark flower' from generation to generation, the struggle of the victims, their atonement or annihilation according to the inevitable justice of the gods, and the ruthlessness of Destiny, that is the great tragic contest displayed in the dramas of Aeschylus. The tragic complication arises afresh as each man sets his own "afflicted will" against the will of Destiny, falls under his inherited tendency to guilt, and pays the penalty of his own peculiar insolence, his own transgression of the limits of human action set by fate. The very gods join hands with fate to help a man on to his ruin, when, like Xerxes, he has set out in insolent pride to attempt what is not permitted to a mortal. That dark background of inevitable Destiny gives a significance to the most trivial act of man, every reversal of fortune becomes a judgment, and Nemesis herself is not a personification of the jealousy of heaven, as in Herodotus, but a symbol of the victory of the moral law over passion.

Destiny

In his choruses Aeschylus illustrates his plays with many a

> "lamentable tale of things
> Done long ago and ill done."

The parodos or first choral lyric of the *Agamemnon* is crowded with 'memories of pain,' the omen of the eagles and the hare that delayed the fleet at Aulis, the sacrifice of Iphigeneia, the insolent treachery of Paris, the flight of Helen through the gates at midnight, the lonely grief of Menelaus. Most poignant of all, because most personal to the singers, is the closing lament for the dead warriors who are mourned in every home in Greece: *Well-known and dear were the men who went forth to the war; but in place of each there comes back to his home a handful of ashes, an unfamiliar urn.*[1]

The choruses

In the first chorus of the *Persae*, by the enumeration of the forces of Persia marshaled by Xerxes, the tale of the men who

[1] Cp. the echo in Tennyson's *Lotos-Eaters*, 'Two handfuls of white dust shut in an urn of brass.'

came from Susa and Ecbatana, from the banks of the Nile, from Sardis and Tmolus and gilded Babylon, Aeschylus achieved two ends. The account of all that array of men and ships, so soon to be scattered, heightened the triumph of the Greeks, and by the recital of lists of half-familiar names of foreign men and places he secured an effect of grandeur and pathos. The device is used by the poets of all times. Vergil, in the seventh Book of the *Aeneid*, impresses the imagination with his long list of the forces of Italy gathered to oppose Aeneas, while Milton outdoes all his classic models with his tale of the millions of dead reviewed by Satan, closing his list of 'Princes, Potentates, and Warriors,' with

> "all who since, baptized or infidel,
> Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
> Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond,
> Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
> When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
> By Fontarabia."

Meters

For its plots and personages, for much of the language and manner of its dialogue, tragedy was deeply indebted to the epic; but the rhythms which it used to express every shade of lyrical emotion were borrowed from the choral melic of the Dorians. Aeschylus used every variety of choral meter, changing from the marching anapaest to the impressive dactylic rhythm or to lively trochaics as his singers changed their mood. He uses the unequal and emotional dochmiac, that peculiarly tragic meter, derived no doubt from the dithyramb, when he wishes to express strong passion, as at the moment when Cassandra first breaks her ominous silence to denounce the blood-stained palace of Atreus.[1] Logaoedics, which Sophocles and Euripides used by preference, are less conspicuous in the choruses of Aeschylus. The monody, the solo by the actor which was to become a striking feature of the plays of Euripides, is used in the *Prometheus Bound*, where Io, pursued by the gadfly, sings her frenzied lyrics. The refrain, so effective for pathos, though

[1] *Agamemnon* 1090.

always used with the risk of failing in its effect, was rare in earlier Greek poetry. Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus, the Alexandrians, may be said to have mastered the refrain and to have escaped absurdity by the skill with which they introduced it in their idyls and dirges. The famous wail, half lament, half prayer, which closes a strophe, antistrophe, and epode in the first chorus of the *Agamemnon*, *Sing woe, sing woe, but let the good prevail*, and the twice repeated invocation of Darius in the *Persae* are instances of that use of the refrain by Aeschylus for which he was ridiculed by Euripides in the *Frogs*.[1] With Aeschylus, if not earlier, the swift and lively trochaic tetrameter, the first meter of tragic dialogue, was superseded by iambic trimeter borrowed from the iambic poets who had followed the lead of Archilochus. But in two scenes of the *Persae*, and at the close of the *Agamemnon*, for the final dispute of Aegisthus and the chorus, Aeschylus uses the older measure which Euripides, later, introduced frequently and with conscious archaism.[2]

The language of Aeschylus is charged with memories of Homer, with Homeric figures and phrases, many no doubt taken directly from the epics to which the poets of Greece turned, as one now turns to the Bible, for the inevitable word or phrase. To the lyric poets he certainly owed even more, but from their scanty remains we cannot measure the debt. He wrote, like Pindar, the austere style which seemed to the Greeks to embody the high ideals and severe and strenuous lives of the generation that fought at Marathon. What he really invented was the tragic style, the style of the tirade. Nothing is easier to ridicule than grandiloquence, and it was not long before the Athenians detected a touch of the absurd in the "frowning towers" of their admired dramatist. To describe the language of Aeschylus,

Style

> "the thunder-phrases of the Athenian, grown
> Up out of memories of Marathon,"

[1] 1265.

[2] The trochaic tetrameter of tragedy consists of eight trochees (_ ⏑) with the final measure shortened (catalectic). The song in Browning's *Blot on the Scutcheon* has a similar rhythm, but the line closes with a full measure, is acatalectic: "There's a woman like a dew-drop, she's so purer than the purest."

Aristophanes in the *Frogs* (405 B.C.) draws on all that is lofty and toppling. The Aeschylean epithet is 'embattled,' his words and phrases have 'beetling brows' or 'waving plumes,' or are mounted on dizzy heights, were in fact 'gathered at Marathon,' as Dionysus hints.[1]

But when Dionysus has to choose which of the three dead tragedians he shall take up with him from the underworld, to bring once again to Athens the delights of the drama, he chooses Aeschylus. The Athenians themselves decided that the plays of Aeschylus should not die with him when they passed the law which allowed his tragedies to be reproduced, even after his death, at the tragic competitions, an honor that was never paid to Sophocles or Euripides.

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[1] *Frogs* 1296.

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CHAPTER XIII

SOPHOCLES

Sophocles, the son of Sophillus, was born in 497 B.C. at 'white Colonus,' a village lying about a mile to the northwest of Athens, where, as he sings in the *Oedipus at Colonus*, the waters of the Cephisus never fail, the narcissus and crocus flower in green glades, and the gray-green olive, greatest beauty of all to the eye of a native of Attica, 'flourishes mightily.' His father belonged to that prosperous merchant class which produced Demosthenes, the orator. Sophocles was twenty-eight years younger than Aeschylus, so that Marathon, where the older poet had played a man's part, was for him a dim memory of childhood. In the rejoicings after Salamis he was old enough to share, and was chosen to lead the choir of boys who sang a paean for the victory. The distinction was a tribute to his personal beauty and skill in music, attested by more than one anecdote of his career as actor in his own tragedies. Sophocles represents the generation that reaped the fruits of Marathon and Salamis. His long life almost coincides with the fifth century, but he incarnates, not those years that saw the gradual dissolution of Athens, but the brilliant half century of Athenian empire that falls between Salamis and the Peloponnesian war, the golden prime of 'shining Athens, the stay of Hellas.' He was twenty-eight when he first entered the tragic competition and defeated Aeschylus. During the next sixty years he won more first prizes than fell to the lot of any other Greek tragedian, and was never placed lower than second. Though he took no active interest in politics, he was twice elected a general. From the first he appears as the happy poet, the man who represents the perfection of the literary art of his time as Pericles realized its political ideals. He was never allured to a foreign

court, like Aeschylus, by chagrin or desire for a foreign triumph, and he was undistracted by the analytic temperament and craving for novelty that tormented Euripides. He is the contented man (εὔκολος) who even in the underworld, says Dionysus,[1] is not to be tempted to change his lot. There is a tradition that at the end of his life he was engaged in a lawsuit with his thankless sons,[2] and his anger is perhaps reflected in his characterization of Oedipus the implacable father in his last play, the *Oedipus at Colonus*. But the story, if true, did not impair the legend that he was, as Phrynichus[3] says, the 'happy Sophocles, happy in his long life, his fortunes, his talent, happy to have written all those beautiful tragedies; happy above all in that he died at last full of honors, untouched by sorrow.' He was indeed spared the sight of the final humiliation of Athens, dying in 405, a few months before the naval disaster of Aegospotami. He was one of the few great Athenians who never bore Athens a grudge, and never went into exile.

Sophocles wrote more than a hundred tragedies of which only seven are extant. The *Ajax*, of uncertain date, and the *Antigone* (440 B.C.) are the earliest of the surviving plays. Many critics place the *Antigone* first in date on the ground that in this play alone Sophocles still observes the practice of Aeschylus in never

[1] Aristoph. *Frogs* 82.

[2] A story goes — When Sophocles, last year,
Cited before tribunal by his son,
Was certified unsound of intellect,
And claimed as only fit for tutelage,
Since old and doting and incompetent
To carry on this world's work, — The defence
Consisted just in his reciting (calm
As the verse bore, which sets our heart a-swell
And voice a-heaving too tempestuously)
That chorus-chant "The station of the steed,
Stranger! thou comest to, — Kolonos white."
Then he looked round and all revolt was dead.
— BROWNING, *Aristophanes' Apology*.

[3] *Frag. Comicorum Graec.* 2. 592 (Meineke).

dividing the iambic trimeter between two or more speakers. The evidence from the structure of the plays is slightly in favor of the priority of the *Ajax*. What the discussion indicates is that even the two earliest of the seven plays represent the mature work of Sophocles.

The greater Ajax, the son of Telamon, is a leading figure in the Homeric epic, second only to Achilles, as the champion of the Greeks in the *Iliad*. When in the *Odyssey* Odysseus met in the underworld the ghosts of his comrades who had died before Troy or on the home-coming, the shade of Ajax would not listen to the soft words and the flattery of the comrade who had won from him the arms of Achilles, but maintained a resentful silence, 'greater and more sublime than words.[1] But the story of that fatal grievance was not told by Homer. Aeschylus when he wrote his trilogy on the adventures of Ajax and Teucer, and Sophocles for this play and for his lost *Teucer*, must have drawn on the cyclic epics, the lost *Aethiopis* and the *Little Iliad*. Of the secret ballot of the Greeks and the injustice done to Ajax we have no account in Greek literature, though Pindar alludes to it more than once to illustrate the baleful effect of envy and malice, and the Award of Arms was a favorite theme in the Greek and Roman schools of rhetoric. Sophocles wrote his play to show the fatal effect of that award on the injured hero. In his wrath he had planned to murder his faithless comrades. But Athene had turned his anger to madness and diverted his sword upon the helpless cattle and sheep, the undivided spoils of Troy. As the play opens she stands before his tent and warns her favorite Odysseus to take to heart this lesson of the strength of the gods. The madness and the delusion were the punishment, not only of that plot of vengeance, but of a violent and independent spirit of which there is no hint in the *Iliad*. Sophocles thinks of Ajax as afflicted in his happier days with a pride like that of Capaneus, who boasted that 'God willing or not willing' he would sack

The Ajax

[1] Longinus, *On the Sublime* 9. Cp. the encounter of Aeneas and Dido and her silence in *Aeneid* 6.

Thebes, and was chosen by Dante for the type of the violent man who held the gods in disdain.[1]

Here then we have the motive for the intervention of Athene. The humiliation of Ajax is complete, and nothing is left him but to die. In the first part of the play the scene is laid before his tent and by means of the eccyclema he is discovered within, sane and ashamed among the slaughtered cattle,

> "sitting alone in blood while friends
> Are hunting far in the sunshine."

But now, as in the *Eumenides*, though not elsewhere in any extant Greek tragedy, the scene changes to a lonely spot on the seashore, where, having escaped from the solicitude of Tecmessa and the chorus of Salaminian sailors, Ajax takes his farewell of life, cursing to the last the treachery of the Atreidae: *O Death, Death, come now and look on me. Nay, thee I may address when I meet thee in the underworld. But thou bright and glorious light of day, and the Sun in his chariot, I greet thee now for the last time and nevermore hereafter. O sunlight! O sacred soil of Salamis, my native land . . . and ye streams and rivers and plains of Troy that have nourished my life, farewell! Nevermore will Ajax address you. The rest shall I speak in Hades with the dead.*[2]

Then he falls on his sword, that 'most hateful of weapons' which had been the gift of Hector and now proved the truth of the proverb: *The gifts of enemies are no gifts and bring no good.* In his dying speech Ajax had prayed to Zeus that Teucer his foster brother might find his body and save it from the vengeance of the Atreidae. In the last four hundred lines of the play Teucer is the leading figure and maintains, first against Menelaus, and then against Agamemnon, the right of Ajax to receive burial. Finally Odysseus, "the man who is not passion's slave," who at the end as at the opening of the play shows himself too generous to exult over his fallen rival, wins the consent of Agamemnon to the funeral rites, and would even have taken part in

[1] *Inferno*, Canto 14. [2] 854 ff.

them had not Teucer feared the displeasure of the implacable dead. To call the latter part of the *Ajax* an anticlimax is to show an incomplete sympathy with the spirit of the Greek dramatist, who seldom placed the crisis, the highest point of interest, at the close of the play. But in any case it was almost as important to the Greek spectator that a tragic hero should be duly buried as that he should meet a violent end. The complication of the slaughter of the flocks has been solved by the death of Ajax. Now we have a new though certainly a minor complication, the difficulty that the Atreidae oppose his burial as bitterly as though he had been one of their Trojan foes.

On his first sight of the body of Ajax, Teucer had foretold the cruel reception that must now be his at Salamis, the bitter reproaches of Telamon, that passionate and morose old man whose son he had failed to save.[1] In his lost play, the *Teucer*, Sophocles, like Aeschylus in his *Salaminians*, dramatized the story of that grievous home-coming and the exile of Teucer to Cyprus, where he founded another Salamis. We have a brief fragment which seems to show that Teucer, before he broke the news of the death of Ajax, had recounted the hero's exploits at Troy. For when Telamon learns the whole truth he exclaims : —

> *O vain delight, wherewith I was delighted,*
> *To hear his praise, as one alive, recited!*
> *The fiend of Death in darkness all the while*
> *Fawning upon me let the joy beguile.*[2]

For the sequel we turn, not to Aeschylus or Sophocles, but to the brief encounter of Teucer and Helen in Egypt in the *Helen* of Euripides, and an ode of Horace in which he recites Teucer's brave challenge to fate, the famous 'never despair' passage, his exhortation to his tried comrades to seek with him a newer world.[3]

[1] *Ajax* 1006.

[2] Phillimore's translation of *fr.* 516.

[3] Nil desperandum Teucro duce et auspice Teucro, 1. 7. Horace's O socii, pejoraque passi, like Vergil's O socii . . . O passi graviora (*Aen.* 1. 199), are reminiscences of *Odyssey* 12. 208. Cp. "My mariners, Souls that have toiled and wrought and thought with me." — TENNYSON, *Ulysses*.

The appointment of Sophocles as a general in the Samian war is said to have been a tribute to the popular success of the *Antigone* (442 or 441 B.C.); a singular reward for a play whose main thesis is that the rights of the individual may in certain cases rank higher than the rights of the State. **The Antigone**

For the story Sophocles drew on the cyclic epics, the *Thebais* and the *Oedipodea*, but the development of the action is his own. For this, his first drama of the Theban saga, he chose the last chapter of the calamities of the house of Laius, and took for protagonist a figure that was henceforth to be the type of heroic self-sacrifice. At the close of our version of the *Seven Against Thebes* of Aeschylus, Antigone, the daughter of Oedipus, a true child of her impracticable father, declares that she will bury the body of her brother Polynices, in defiance of the edict of Creon, the new ruler of Thebes. The penalty of disobedience is death, but the threat has no terrors for one whose parents and brothers have perished. Antigone is betrothed to Haemon, Creon's son, but, like the Persian princess in Herodotus, she thought that her brother's claims canceled every other human tie. *O king*, said the wife of Intaphernes, *I may have another husband if God will, and other children if I lose these; but another brother I cannot have.*[1] In almost the same words Antigone says that not for child or husband would she have disobeyed the edict of the citizens. The dramatic situation lies in the conflict of the wills of Creon and Antigone. She asserts that she has followed 'the unwritten code of the gods, framed not to-day nor yesterday, but fixed forever.' He displays all the obstinacy, the jealousy for his authority, natural to a tyrant whose power has been intermittent and is only lately assured. He will make no concessions to the sacred claim of the unburied dead, or to a sister's devotion, or to the entreaties of Antigone's lover, his own son. Sophocles went out of his way to introduce a love-

[1] Herod. 3. 119. Cp. *Antigone* 909 ff. It is impossible to decide whether Sophocles borrowed the idea from his friend. Other passages in which he seems to reflect Herodotus are *O. at C.* 337–341; cp. Herod. 2. 35; with *Electra* 417–423, cp. 1. 108.

interest in the *Antigone*. According to the prose version of the legend in the Graeco-Roman handbook of Mythology (*Bibliotheca*), which passes under the name of Apollodorus, Haemon the son of Creon was killed by the Sphinx before the first coming of Oedipus to Thebes. In the tragedy of Sophocles he appears as the Romeo of the Greek drama, resolved to die with his betrothed. Yet Sophocles never brings him on the stage with Antigone, and in her exalted mood of self-sacrifice she almost ignores Haemon. Before she is led away to be buried alive she sings a dirge for her early death, for the fate that sends her to the grave unwedded, for the grievous woes of her house. In all this there is no touch of personal feeling for Haemon, no mention of his name. Haemon himself pleads her cause in the name, not of personal passion, but of justice and family piety. It is Matthew Arnold, not Sophocles, who makes her lover reproach Antigone as

> "One than Creon crueller far.
> For he, he, at least, by slaying her,
> August laws doth mightily vindicate;
> But thou, too-bold, headstrong, pitiless!
> Ah me! honorest more than thy lover,
> O Antigone,
> A dead, ignorant, thankless corpse." [1]

Nevertheless the final catastrophe of the play is the direct result of his passion. When Creon, shaken at last by the warning of the seer Teiresias, goes to release Antigone, he is too late. She has hanged herself, and Haemon is there before him, clinging in frantic grief to her dead body. In that 'bridal chamber paved with stone' Creon's son falls upon his sword. Eurydice the queen, when the messenger relates the dreadful scene, goes into the palace without a word 'good or evil.' Her broken-hearted silence, like the silent exit of Deianira in a later play, the *Trachiniae*, is ominous even to the chorus. Creon, entering with Haemon's corpse, is greeted by the crowning grief of the queen's suicide. With this last crushing calamity the story of the house of Oedipus

[1] *Fragment of an Antigone.*

comes to an end. Ismene, the sole survivor, appears in Greek tragedy only as a foil to her heroic sister, a colorless figure whom the saga rejects.

Hegel thought the *Antigone* "the most perfect and excellent of all dramas."[1] But that was because he saw in it, not a drama of the emotions, but a purely intellectual opposition, woman in the person of Antigone defending her peculiar province of family piety against the essentially masculine law of the State, a sex distinction which certainly did not occur to an Athenian audience.[2] Aristotle's judgment is more likely to appeal to the modern reader. In the *Rhetoric*, when he insists on the stability of the unwritten law as opposed to fallible human conventions, he quotes a few lines of Antigone's fine rhetorical defense.[3] But he did not, like Hegel, consider the *Antigone* the masterpiece of the Greek drama. That distinction, as we know from the *Poetics*, he reserved for the *Oedipus Tyrannus*. Antigone is in fact too austere, too blameless, for the ideal tragic protagonist, who must display some infirmity of purpose, some lapse of piety, if he is to arouse the pity and fear of the spectators.

The *Electra* is one of the latest of the plays. It contains an anapaestic solo (monody) by Electra[4] such as is found elsewhere only in the later plays of Euripides, one of those songs from the stage which tended to become more important than the lyrics of the chorus and were ridiculed by Aristophanes when he attacked the New Music in the *Frogs*. Another sign of lateness is the form of the first chorus, the parodos, which is a

The Electra

[1] *Aesthetics* III 2.

[2] Cp. Girard, *L'Hégélianisme dans l'interprétation de l'Antigone de Sophocle*, in his *Études sur la Poésie Grecque*.

[3] *Rhetoric* I. 12; I. 15.

[4] 86–120. In the older plays, *e.g.* the *Supplices*, *Persae*, and *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus, anapaestic rhythms were regularly employed by the chorus as it entered the theater chanting the parodos. For this rhythm cp. *Lochiel's Warning:*—

> "For a field of the dead rushes red on my sight,
> And the clans of Cullo'den are scattered in flight."

duet (kommos) with Electra, as in the latest play, the *Oedipus at Colonus*. The chorus of Mycenaean women sing barely a hundred lines of lyric independently of the actors. The *Electra* of Euripides was produced about 413 B.C., and the Sophoclean *Electra* probably falls within the preceding decade.[1] Like the *Choephori* of Aeschylus, the *Electra* is a drama of revenge. But here Electra, not Orestes, is the protagonist and appears in every scene, claiming her share in the punishment of her father's murderers. Her younger sister, Chrysothemis, a replica of Ismene in the *Antigone*, has adapted herself to the conditions in the palace after the death of Agamemnon. But Electra was not to be conciliated. She is a woman embittered by the threats and insults of her mother and Aegisthus, by years of protest and of waiting for her father's avenger. In the hour of her triumph she is pitiless; when she hears from within the dying cry of Clytemnestra, she cries to her brother, *Strike, if thou canst, a second stroke!* The Sophoclean Orestes is a less tragic and less effective figure than the fate-driven man who in the *Choephori* is maddened by the Furies of remorse in the very hour of his success. Here he is rather the goodly Orestes of the *Odyssey*, who won for himself renown among all men in that he slew the slayer of his sire, and was held up by Athene to Telemachus as a pattern of filial piety. The strategy to conceal his return from his mother and Aegisthus is more elaborate and more convincing than in the *Choephori*. A messenger who brings the report of his death at the Pythian games is soon followed by a second, carrying the urn that is said to contain his ashes. In one of the finest descriptive passages of the Greek drama the messenger tells Electra how the son of Agamemnon, failing to remember Nestor's warning to Antilochus in the *Iliad* to avoid collision with the goal post in making the turn, had fallen from his chariot and perished, dragged along the race course by his frantic horses. The Sophoclean passage is a reminiscence of

[1] The arguments of Wilamowitz in *Hermes* 18 in favor of dating the Euripidean *Electra* earlier than the Sophoclean are not convincing. See Vahlen in *Hermes* 26, and Jebb's Introduction to his edition.

the *Iliad*,[1] and Vergil borrowed from both Homer and Sophocles for his famous description of a chariot race in the *Georgics*.[2]

The recognition of the brother and sister is brought about, not directly by the lock of his hair which Chrysothemis reports that she has seen on the tomb of Agamemnon, but by the avowal of Orestes, who is impelled to reveal himself by the sight of the agonised grief of Electra over the urn that, as she thinks, holds his ashes. Clytemnestra is slain first, and her dying shriek is heard from within, a reminiscence of the death of Aegisthus in the *Choephori*. Only now does Aegisthus arrive, and a new and effective scene is that in which he learns of her death and his approaching fate. He is bidden to lift the veil from the dead Orestes and, when he sees instead the dead body of Clytemnestra, he knows that he is in the presence of the living avenger. In reserving the death of Aegisthus for the end, Sophocles perhaps intended to secure for Orestes the sympathy of the spectators at the close of the play. For Orestes is haunted by no Furies, and no sense of fresh guilt to be expiated darkens the end of the *Electra* as it darkened the last scene of the *Choephori*. Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides all brought Electra and Orestes on the stage. It was the Aeschylean Orestes, *tristis*, haunted by the Furies, who became the traditional Orestes in literature. But Electra was to maintain in the tradition her Sophoclean likeness, unaffected by the realistic handling of Euripides, a figure with bolder outlines and a more ruthless purpose than had been allowed to her by Aeschylus.

For the date of the *Oedipus Tyrannus* there is no external evidence. It was produced at some point in the thirty years or more that separate the *Antigone* (441 B.C.) and the *Oedipus at Colonus*. In writing the opening lines, which describe the plague at Thebes, Sophocles may have drawn on his personal memories of the plague that ravaged Athens in 430, but he would hardly have risked a too pointed reminder of the sufferings of his hearers while those sufferings were still fresh. The *Oedipus*, a tragedy of the fall of intellectual pride, is the

The Oedipus Tyrannus

[1] XXIII 336. [2] 3. 103.

model play of the Greek drama. From it Aristotle framed his prescription for a perfect tragedy. When he says in the *Poetics* that the ideal tragic hero must be a man not wholly good, whose downfall would merely shock the spectator, nor wholly bad, since the spectacle of his ruin would be neither pitiful nor terrible, but rather one who falls from his high place and happiness by some single error or weakness of character, one in whom

> "The dram of base
> Doth all the noble substance oft subdue
> To his own scandal,"

he is thinking of the Sophoclean Oedipus. The *Oedipus Tyrannus* is a perfect example of that 'complex' tragedy in which a signal change of fortune from good to bad and a 'reversal' of intention accompanies the 'recognition' of the identity of the persons.[1]

Oedipus is the most lamentable and the most tragic figure of the Greek drama. When the play begins, the shadow of his calamities or rather his recognition of them, which is the motive of the tragedy, has already begun to darken the prosperity of the king of Thebes. He learns from his wife's brother Creon, who has consulted the Delphic oracle, that the plague which is destroying his people cannot be stayed unless the murderer of Laius, who ruled Thebes before the coming of Oedipus, be expelled from the city. From the first it is Oedipus who sets in motion the inquiry which is to discover his own ruin. His is a fatal curiosity which, against all dissuasion, persists in dragging to light the secret that is to recoil against himself. He is himself the slayer whom he forbids his people to harbor, so that 'evilly, as he himself is evil, he may wear out his miserable life.' When Teiresias the blind seer, who alone in the city knows the truth, tells him that he is the murderer who pollutes the land, he sees in the mouthpiece of Apollo only a fellow-conspirator of Creon, intriguing to drive him from the throne. His first suspicion of at least half the truth comes, not from the plain denunciation of Teiresias, *Thou art the murderer!* but from

[1] *Poetics* 10–11.

the speech of Jocasta the unbelieving. To confirm him in his skepticism as to oracles she relates the circumstances of the death of Laius. The whole structure of the play and the effectiveness of the 'peripeteia,' the turning point, depends on an improbability, the previous silence of Jocasta as to the manner of her first husband's death.[1] Her reassurance is the first revelation. Just so, when the messenger who brings from Corinth the news of the death of King Polybus, thinks to comfort Oedipus with the assurance that he is not the true son of the dead king, he reveals to Jocasta in her turn the terrible truth. *Alas! alas! wretched man*, she cries, *by that name alone can I address thee and by none other henceforth forever!* and rushes from the stage. While Oedipus does not yet realize the worst, the tragic tension is maintained. But the herdsman to whom the child Oedipus had been given by Jocasta to be exposed had been summoned from the country, and from his reluctant answers the king learns the whole truth. The last link in the chain of evidence is in its place. He knows that the oracle of Apollo has been brought to pass. He has slain his father and married his mother. *Thou light!* he cries, *may I now look my last on thee!* and follows Jocasta into the palace. There, as the messenger from within soon relates to the chorus, he finds the body of Jocasta the queen who has hanged herself. 'With a deep and dreadful cry' the wretched man loosed the halter and blinded his eyes with the gold brooches torn from her dress. In the last scene Sophocles brings Oedipus back on the stage with all the horror of his bleeding face and blinded eyes. He exclaims that Apollo is the cause of all his woes and begs to be led forth from the land, entreating the compassion of Creon for Antigone and Ismene, his helpless children, who are brought in by the attendants. But even exile may not be his until the consent of Apollo has been gained, nor must that mutilated figure be allowed to pol-

1 "Tout ce que je puis te dire, O critique pointu, c'est que, s'ils s'étaient expliqués auparavant, ce serait dommage, parce qu'il n'y aurait pas de pièce et que la pièce est admirable," Sarcey in *Quarante ans de théâtre.*

lute the sunlight. Creon, now the ruler of Thebes, leads Oedipus up the steps that he may hide his shame in the obscurity of the palace.

His too great wisdom ruined Oedipus. Unaided by heaven, as he boasts, he had read the riddle of the Sphinx, when even Teiresias, for all his soothsaying, had failed. And so Apollo turned the edge of his own wisdom against him. Impious, however, like Jocasta, he is not, for all his pride of human wit, and in his last phase, in the *Oedipus at Colonus*, Sophocles was to show him reconciled with the gods and honored, like Amphiaraus the blameless, by a painless and mysterious end, by translation instead of death.

It is one of the unsolved mysteries of the Athenian theater that the *Oedipus Tyrannus* did not win the first prize. Sophocles was defeated by the nephew of Aeschylus, and to account for that strange decision of the judges it has been conjectured that Philocles competed with one of his uncle's plays.

The *Trachiniae* is the only extant play of Sophocles that takes its name from the chorus, the maidens of Trachis in Thessaly where the scene is laid. For the date there is no external evidence, but the Euripidean prologue in which Deianira gives the audience the situation, telling the story of her youth and the wooing of Heracles, and the anapaests of Heracles and Hyllus at the close, are signs of lateness. As a whole the play falls below the Sophoclean level, chiefly from its lack of unity, the interest being concentrated for the first half of the action on Deianira, and falling off when Heracles becomes the protagonist. Sophocles found in the cyclic epic, the *Taking of Oechalia*, the story of the enterprise of Heracles in Euboea, and his passion for Iole the daughter of Eurytus of Oechalia which brought about the disaster dramatized in the *Trachiniae*. More than one minor epic poet had written a *Heracleia* to celebrate the exploits of Heracles, notably the Dorian Peisander (*circa* 650 B.C.), and Panyasis the Ionian (480 B.C.), who, as the kinsman of Herodotus, may well have been read by Sophocles, the historian's

The Trachiniae

friend. Archilochus, the iambic poet, had made Heracles the typical conquering hero (καλλίνικος). Pindar loved the national hero of the Dorians and in his *First* and *Tenth Nemean Odes* sang of his apotheosis after death. In his *Fifth Ode*, Bacchylides relates how Heracles met Meleager in the underworld and promised that on his return to the upper air he would marry the 'sweet-throated' Deianira, Meleager's sister. Sophocles had found his plot already outlined by Bacchylides in the *Sixteenth Ode*, where the poet sang of Deianira's love charm, and how ruin had lain in wait for her from the fatal day when she took in her hands the poisonous gift of Nessus, and he clearly echoes the language of that ode.[1] But the Attic dramatists did not follow the example of the epic and lyric poets. They felt that Heracles, the gluttonous hero of the saga, was more suited to the comic than the tragic stage. He is the hero of only one other Greek tragedy, the *Mad Heracles* of Euripides,[2] and of two Roman, the *Mad Hercules* and the *Hercules on Oeta* of Seneca.

The *Trachiniae* is a drama of the jealous wife who tries to regain her husband's affection, a character not easily made interesting. In no other extant play has Sophocles used so modern a motive. The great achievement of the *Trachiniae* is his characterization of Deianira the Aetolian heroine, who is the true protagonist. Her joy at the news that, after his year of slavery to Omphale in Lydia and his Euboean expedition, Heracles is about to return home, is changed to bitterness when she learns that the cause of that expedition was his passion for Iole of Oechalia. Iole is brought in like Cassandra, the flower of the spoil, and, like Cassandra, meets the questions of Deianira with obstinate silence. But Deianira is no Clytemnestra, and there is no anger in her

[1] Cp. Bacchylides 16. 13 ff. with *Trachiniae* 750 ff.

[2] Wilamowitz, who is inclined to exaggerate the influence on Sophocles of Euripides, fails to prove conclusively that the *Mad Heracles* was written first, or that Sophocles was inspired to dramatize the story of Heracles by the example of his younger rival. See his *Heracles* I. pp. 343, 382. Zieliński, in *Philologus* 55, maintains that the *Trachiniae* is one of the earlier plays.

grief: *I felt a profound pity when I beheld her, because it is her beauty that has wrecked her life, and she, hapless one, all innocent, brought her fatherland to ruin and bondage.* The numerous amours of Heracles Deianira has hitherto been able to ignore, since they did not affect his home. But she now remembers the gift of Nessus the centaur whom Heracles slew as he carried her in his arms across the river Evenus. He had bidden her to gather up his life blood and to preserve it as a love charm, 'so that he shall never look on any woman to love her more than thee.' Now she takes out the love philter, anoints with it a robe of state, and sends it to Heracles to be worn at the sacrifice that must still be made before he can leave Euboea. Sophocles now disregards the 'Unity of Time' almost as boldly as Aeschylus had disregarded it in the *Agamemnon*. Lichas carries the "shirt of Nessus" to Euboea and, after the brief interval of a chorus and a few words of dialogue, a hundred lines at most, Deianira's son Hyllus arrives from Euboea to denounce his mother. Heracles is dying, slain by the legacy of Nessus, by the hand of the dead, as the oracles had long ago foretold.

The most effective moment in the play is the silent exit of Deianira, who hears her son's curses without a word of self-defense, and turning from him goes into the house. There, like a true daughter of Althaea, who like her had caused the death of her dearest, she slays herself with the sword. The rest of the play is a picture of the dying agonies of Heracles. All his suffering cannot make him a sympathetic figure. He recognizes the hand of the gods, and, without a thought for Deianira, is carried out to his funeral pyre on Mt. Oeta, having bidden Hyllus to marry Iole. The tragic gloom of the ending is unrelieved by any clear promise of that apotheosis on which Pindar loved to dwell, though it is assumed by Sophocles himself in the *Philoctetes*. It was Philoctetes who lit the pyre and received from the dying hero the bow and arrows that were destined to take Troy. *Mark the great cruelty of the gods*, says Hyllus at the close, *They beget children, they are hailed as fathers, and yet they can look on such sufferings as these.*

The future no man can foresee, but the present is full of sorrow and shame.

The *Philoctetes* (409 B.C.) is one of the latest plays. In the *Catalogue of the Ships* Homer alludes to Philoctetes, lying in sore pain in the island of Lemnos; *yet were the Argives beside their ships soon to bethink them of Philoctetes.* But it was in the cyclic epics, the *Cypria* and the *Little Iliad*, that the sorrows of the limping hero had been told in detail. Pindar in the *First Pythian* (470 B.C.) had described how Odysseus fawned on Philoctetes when he needed him at last, how the latter went to Troy, vexed by the pain of his wound, and, for all his pain and weakness, sacked the city and ended the toils of the Greeks. Long before Sophocles wrote his *Philoctetes*, Aeschylus and Euripides had both produced tragedies on the same theme and with the same general outline. Both had introduced into the legend the refusal of Philoctetes to go to Troy, a dramatic opposition absent from the less complicated epic version. In both these lost plays Odysseus, the diplomatist of the Greek army, had shared the embassy to Lemnos. But Sophocles was the first to introduce the character of Neoptolemus, and so to achieve the contrast of elderly diplomacy and generous youth which is the chief interest of this drama of intrigue. On that first voyage to Troy, Philoctetes had been bitten in the foot by the serpent that guarded the altar of the goddess on the island of Chrysa. On the advice of Odysseus, the Greek chiefs, fearing the evil omen and annoyed by the hero's cries and the odor of the festering wound, had left him marooned on Lemnos. In the plays of Aeschylus and Euripides the chorus was composed of sympathetic Lemnians. But Sophocles heightened the pathetic impression and his hero's grievance by picturing Lemnos a desert island where, for ten years, Philoctetes had dragged out a lonely and suffering existence. The problem of the play is how to persuade this embittered man to go to Troy and help his faithless friends. At each separate crisis of the action before the intervention of Heracles, the plot hangs on the disposition of Neoptolemus. Odysseus has

The Philoctetes

hardly persuaded him to win over Philoctetes by fraud instead of force or reasoning when he is left alone to confront the injured man with his strategy. The delight of Philoctetes at the sight of a Greek face and the sound of Greek speech, and his ready belief in the loyalty of a son of Achilles, make the task of Neoptolemus easy. He pretends that he is bound for Greece, chagrined, like the other, by the slights of the leaders of the army. The prayer of Philoctetes not to be left behind, his appeal in the name of pity, of generosity, of religion, of the love of glory, is a masterpiece of tragic eloquence. Neoptolemus consents, and Philoctetes takes a pathetic farewell of the gloomy cave that has grown so dear. But a sudden paroxysm of pain from his wound delays their departure. Neoptolemus has so far played his part well as the accomplice of Odysseus. The famous bow and arrows are in his hands, and, when Philoctetes wakes from the stupor that follows the attack of pain, the moment has come to lead him to the ship and embark for Troy. But now Neoptolemus hesitates in his treachery. The sight of such suffering has touched his heart and he confesses the truth. While he wavers, Odysseus enters, and, failing to induce Philoctetes to go with them, declares that the weapons of Heracles will suffice; they will leave the obstinate man on Lemnos. He goes out with Neoptolemus, leaving Philoctetes to lament to the sympathetic chorus of sailors. But pity has restored his true disposition to Neoptolemus, and he returns to give back the bow, followed by Odysseus with vain protests and threats. Even his gratitude to the son of Achilles cannot move Philoctetes from his resolve. In this real dilemma, a knot worthy the intervention of a god from the machine,[1] Heracles comes from heaven to declare to his old comrade the will of Zeus that he should sail to Troy, be healed of his wound, slay Paris, and take the city of Priam.

Dio Chrysostom, the Graeco-Roman rhetorician, who had read all the three tragic versions of the Philoctetes legend, decided

[1] Horace, *Ars Poetica* 191.

that Sophocles had surpassed both Aeschylus and Euripides in tragic effect and beauty of language.[1] It is easy to believe that in the Sophoclean *Philoctetes* we have the golden mean. Sophocles avoided archaic severity and too great simplicity of plot, on the one hand, and on the other the sentimentalism and the sophistic rhetoric which Euripides must have lavished on such a situation.

The chorus of sailors in the *Philoctetes* is merely the sympathetic escort of Neoptolemus, and its independent share of the lyrics is reduced to a single stasimon of fifty-three verses (676–729). In place of the old-fashioned parodos, a duet (kommos) with Neoptolemus is sung on its entrance (135 ff.).

The *Philoctetes* was a drama of exile, with a hero whom his country had set aside, and at last recalled in the hour of need. Hence the conjecture, wholly unsupported by external evidence, that Sophocles wrote the play with a political motive, to suggest to the Athenians that now, after the failure of the Sicilian expedition, the time had come for the recall of Alcibiades from exile.

The *Oedipus at Colonus* was the masterpiece of the poet's old age. Like the *Eumenides* it is a drama of the reconciliation of the hero with heaven; it is the sequel, long delayed, of the *Oedipus Tyrannus*. Sophocles forsook the tradition that Oedipus died at Thebes, and made his hero's wanderings end in his own deme Colonus, in the grove of the Eumenides, **The Oedipus at Colonus**

> "where Oidipous
> Dared the descent mid earthquake thundering
> And hardly Theseus' hands availed to guard
> Eyes from the horror, as their grove disgorged
> Its dead ones, while each daughter sank to ground."[2]

"Does the soul flower only on nights of storm?" asks Maeterlinck, pleading for the "static" drama. Action and passion were essential to the Greek conception of tragedy. But in the *Oedipus at Colonus*, at any rate, we have for hero an old man whose days of action are over, whose only aspiration is the death with which the

[1] *Oration* 52. 272.

[2] Browning, *Aristophanes' Apology*.

play closes.[1] In the jealousies and dissensions that are rending Thebes he refuses to take part. Athens is his haven, and there he is granted an end that is a consecration. Action for him is over. But even in this last phase we see the passionate Oedipus, the implacable father, the Lear of Greek tragedy. Almost with his last breath he bequeathes to his sons, Eteocles and Polynices, who had driven him into exile, that heirloom of a curse which is worked out in the *Seven against Thebes* of Aeschylus, the parent's curse that was so dreaded by the saga heroes. The *Oedipus at Colonus* is linked to an earlier play, the *Antigone*, by the pathetic appeal of Polynices to Antigone and Ismene to give him burial: *Ah ye, his daughters and my sisters, — since ye hear these hard prayers of your sire, — if this father's curses be fulfilled, and some way of return to Thebes be found for you, oh, as ye fear the gods do not, for your part, dishonor me, — nay give me burial, and due funeral rites.*[2]

Cicero is the earliest authority for the story, often quoted by later writers, that when Sophocles in extreme old age was driven by his sons to defend in a court of law his ability to manage his own affairs, he recited to the judges his last play, the *Oedipus at Colonus*, which was accepted as a triumphant proof that his faculties were unimpaired.

The *Oedipus Tyrannus*, the *Oedipus at Colonus*, and the *Antigone* dramatize three successive phases in the saga of the house of Oedipus, and fall naturally into a trilogy. But they were not written in that order; the *Antigone*, which gives the last chapter of the story, was produced first. Sophocles did not write trilogies, and though he probably competed with the conventional number of tragedies, they were not linked together. A more important innovation was his use of a third actor, immediately adopted by Aeschylus. By this means he still further curtailed the importance of the chorus, increasing at its expense the value and range of the secondary characters, since the tritagonist, Odysseus, for instance, in the *Philoctetes*, could now be directly

Innovations

[1] Cicero called it *illud mollissimum carmen*, tenderest of poems: *De Fin.* 5. 1.

[2] 1405 ff. Jebb's translation.

contrasted with the other two ; nor need the protagonist now leave the stage at a critical moment, as Atossa in the *Persae*, for which only two actors were used, must go out before the entrance of her son. All the innovations of Sophocles tended to make tragedy more flexible, more complex, an affair of greater art. He broke through the etiquette that the poet, though often, no doubt, an indifferent actor, must himself take a leading rôle. Accordingly, about the middle of the fifth century, the name of the victorious actor appears in the theater records (didascaliae) together with the name of the poet. He increased the chorus from twelve to fifteen, probably because he found that number more convenient for the choric dances. His choruses never, of course, advance the action, but he made them an integral part of the play, reflecting the action at every point, though always in a mood undistracted, as had been the more emotional choruses of Aeschylus, by personal terrors or griefs.

The remote, the monstrous, the Titanic, did not appeal to Sophocles. He took his characters from the heroic saga, choosing those whose adventures had a closely human interest. Ideal types they were, but still essentially human. When he puts on the stage a picture of acute physical suffering, it is not the superhuman torment of a Prometheus or an Io, but the blinded eyes of Oedipus, the dying agony of Heracles, the painful lameness of Philoctetes. Though he took no pride, like Aeschylus, in excluding a love interest, love in his plays is still one of the minor motives. Only in the *Trachiniae*, where the flame of his inspiration burns lowest, is passionate love the mainspring of the action. He handled the saga freely, introducing fresh complications and, except in the *Trachiniae*, an original and dramatic development of the legend.

Sophocles was a master of tragic eloquence. No one could write more effectively than he those set speeches which were the dramatist's, as they had been the epic poet's, opportunity for brilliant rhetoric. Such is the messenger's description of the chariot race in the *Electra;* the tirade of Heracles in the *Trachiniae*, reciting his great exploits, all ended now

Sophoclean rhetoric

by the weak hand of a woman ; the tale of his sufferings on Lemnos by Philoctetes. Tragic dialogue is with Sophocles an affair of the highest art. Fifteen years before Gorgias, the Sicilian rhetorician, came to Athens and charmed the sensitive ears of the Athenians with his symmetrical and artificial prose, we find Sophocles, in the *Antigone*, in full command of all those devices for symmetry, antithesis, repetitions of words, and similar endings which Gorgias and his imitators used to excess. The ingenious Sicilian thus found ready to his hand in tragedy the artistic effects that he transferred to prose.[1]

The true tragic hero is unconscious of his doom, and the effect of his ignorance on the spectators is all the more striking if he points by his own language the unconscious contrast between what he is and what he thinks he is. Sophocles uses this device, his so-called 'irony,' with peculiar skill. The contrast is usually pathetic, as when Oedipus, still blind to his own situation, alluding again and again to the murderer of Laius, unconsciously threatens and curses himself; or when Ajax in his madness boasts of his success and gives thanks to Athene who has worked his ruin. But the contrast may be thrilling without pathos, if the sympathy of the spectator be against the speaker, as when, in the *Electra*, Clytemnestra exults that on this day she has been freed from all her terror of Orestes, who, as the spectator knows, is even then waiting his opportunity near the palace.[2]

Pathetic contrast

Sophocles, according to Plutarch, said of his own style that when he began to write he had imitated the tragic manner, the pomp, of Aeschylus ; that in a second stage he had erred on the side of elaboration and subtlety ; and had finally achieved a third style, the mean of the other two, which he thought best fitted to express character. The Sophocles who sur-

Style

[1] See the analysis of Sophoclean rhetoric by Navarre, *Essai sur la rhétorique grecque* 98 ff.

[2] A good instance of Shakespeare's use of pathetic contrast is Desdemona's answer to Emilia's question "Is he not jealous ?" "Who, he ? I think the sun where he was born Drew all such humors from him."

vives in our seven plays is the mature poet who, standing between Aeschylus and Euripides, did not disdain to reflect their influence, though his genius saved him from the faults of both. Simmias of Rhodes, the Alexandrian poet who wrote his epitaph, like Matthew Arnold, dwelt on the sweetness and wisdom of the singer of Colonus "who saw life steadily and saw it whole." *Gently over the tomb of Sophocles, gently creep, O ivy, flinging forth thy pale tresses, and all about let the rose petal blow, and the clustered vine shed her soft tendrils round, for the sake of the wise-hearted eloquence mingled of the muses and the Graces that lived on his honeyed tongue.*[1]

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[1] Mackail's translation of *Anth. Pal.* 7. 22.

CHAPTER XIV

EURIPIDES

EURIPIDES, son of Mnesarchides (or Mnesarchus), of the Attic village Phlya, was born on Salamis in the year of the battle (480 B.C.). The Greek passion for symmetry and picturesque coincidences in literary history was not satisfied with so much, and so the legend arose that the youngest of the three great tragedians came into the world on the very day of the sea fight in which Aeschylus took part, the day of victory, at whose close Sophocles, like Miriam the prophetess, led the song of triumph. The tradition is respectfully reserved as to the private life of Aeschylus, and consistently indulgent to Sophocles. But it would be easy to write two separate accounts of the family life of Euripides, in which every detail, from the year of his birth (placed by some authorities in 485), and the name of his father, down to the cause of his death, should be absolutely opposed. From the more flattering of these contradictory versions we should have to exclude all the spiteful and scurrilous gossip of his persistent enemies, the comic poets, especially Aristophanes. In their plays Euripides figured as the son of a bankrupt shopkeeper from Boeotia and a mother who sold vegetables; as himself twice married, deceived by both wives, and avenging these injuries by reviling the whole sex in his tragedies. In the other, more disinterested version, based mainly on Philochorus, the third century biographer, we find him the scion of an aristocratic family, who as a boy held offices that fell only to the sons of the best families at Athens, and with his matrimonial troubles limited at any rate by one wife. But at the best we could not construct for him a satisfactory set of conditions such as were the lot of Aeschylus and Sophocles. He was melancholy, reserved, and unsociable, a dis-

Life.

position always thoroughly disliked at Athens; one who took no part in politics, shut himself up with his books,[1] and studied those suspected persons, the philosophers, especially Anaxagoras and Protagoras.

Euripides was, in short, out of sympathy with his time and with the average Athenian as completely as Sophocles, the easy-going, was in touch with them. In his fifty years of work he won only five first prizes, the fifth after his death, and was often placed last. On his first appearance he was virtually defeated, being awarded the third prize for the tetralogy that included the *Daughters of Pelias;* and it was not till 440 that he won the first place. More than once he scandalized his sensitive audience so that they interrupted, and would have stopped the play but for his explanations. The Athenians went to the theater of Dionysus as though to a temple, and even Aeschylus did not always content their demand for scrupulous piety. They distrusted this younger rationalist, this philosopher on the stage, who had no particular feeling about Marathon, was the friend of Socrates, and had learned from the impious Protagoras that the individual is the measure of right and wrong.[2]

Euripides spent the last year and a half of his life at the court of Archelaus. This was that king of Macedonia described in Plato's *Gorgias* as the typical tyrant whom Socrates declines to call happy. With the ambition to Hellenize his country, he invited to Pella the leading poets and artists of Greece; and, if he could, would have added even Socrates to the ornaments of his court. To Pella went Agathon, the tragic poet, the host in Plato's *Sym-*

[1] "Soon the jeers grew: cold hater of his kind,
A sea cave suits him, not the vulgar hearth!
What need of tongue talk with a bookish store
Would stock ten cities?"
— BROWNING, *Aristophanes' Apology.*

[2] *What shame is there if the doer feels no shame?* asks Macareus in *fr.* 19, parodied by Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1475.

posium, Timotheus, the writer of nomes and dithyrambs, and Thucydides. Euripides never returned to Athens. In the winter of 407–406 he died in Thrace, near Amphipolis, and there, for the next five centuries at least, his tomb was an object of interest to travelers. The tradition could not let him die in peace. He was torn in pieces, said his biographers, by the hounds of Archelaus; or, as seemed more likely when one remembered the end of Orpheus, or of his own Pentheus, by women, perhaps in retaliation for his libels on their sex. To Euripides dead the Athenians paid all the honors. Sophocles, whose own days were numbered, is said to have made his chorus at a proagon (rehearsal) wear black and leave off their garlands, in mourning for his younger rival, while the state erected a cenotaph in his honor. His epitaph, a quatrain worthy of Simonides, passes under the name of Thucydides in the *Anthology*,[1] but is also credited to Timotheus, another of his friends at the court of Archelaus.

Of the ninety-two plays said to have been written by Euripides, eighteen have survived, or nineteen, if we count the *Rhesus* genuine. Nine of these, the *Hecuba*, *Orestes*, *Phoenissae*, *Andromache*, *Rhesus*, *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Alcestis*, and *Troades* (*Trojan Women*), were regularly read in the schools, and have come down to us in numerous manuscripts, with scholia. The remaining ten, the *Suppliants*, *Ion*, *Cyclops*, *Heracleidae*, *Helen*, *Mad Heracles*, *Electra*, *Bacchae*, *Iphigeneia among the Taurians*, and *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, are preserved in only two manuscripts, and without scholia. We have fragments of about fifty-nine plays.

The Alcestis

The earliest of the extant plays, the *Alcestis*, was produced in 438. The Thessalian legend of Alcestis, daughter of the ill-fated Pelias, who chose to die for her husband, when he, trying all in turn,

[1] *Anth. Pal.* 7. 45. *All Hellas is the monument of Euripides. Yet his bones rest in Macedonian soil.* . . . See, too, *Anth. Pal.* 7. 51. *Thou wast not slain by dogs, Euripides.* . . .

"found no one, none who loved so much,
Nor father, nor the aged mother's self
That bore him ; no, not any save his wife
Willing to die instead of him,"[1]

had been used by Phrynichus in his lost *Alcestis*, a play which may have contained even more of the comic element than is employed by Euripides.[2] The Euripidean *Alcestis* was written as the fourth play in a tetralogy, was therefore a substitute for a satyric drama, and is best described as a tragi-comedy. Heracles the glutton was indeed better suited, even when he came as the deliverer of Alcestis, to a satyric than a tragic piece. Speeches in character, with a touch of comedy, such as the nurse's speech in the *Choephori*, or the guard's in the *Antigone*, were often used to relieve for the moment the tension of a tragedy. But in no other extant Greek drama is there so violent a contrast as that of the pathetic end of Alcestis and the description of the boisterous drunkenness of Heracles. Here was a god sent to wrestle with Death himself, brawling at table, and bidding the downcast servant eat, drink, and be merry. Browning could not tolerate the sordid realism of the minor characters of the *Alcestis*, and in his paraphrase transforms Heracles from the convivial athlete of Euripides to a radiant and divine presence, the central figure of the play. But he did not attempt to soften the ludicrous and repugnant scene of the altercation of Admetus and Pheres, where the son taunts the father with his love of life, and is met with the retort that it is not the custom of the house that fathers should die for their sons, 'nor is it Greek.' But without the weak and selfish there would be no opening for that 'heroism of Alcestis,' which passed into a Greek proverb. She dies on the stage, in front of her palace at Pherae, an effect rarely admitted in a Greek tragedy, though we have seen it in the *Ajax* of Sophocles. But Hades, as Apollo had foretold in the prologue, gives up his prey to Heracles, yielding to the

[1] Browning's paraphrase in *Balaustion's Adventure*.
[2] Wilamowitz, *Heracles* I 92.

claims of human affection, as in the legends of Eurydice and Protesilaus. Alcestis is brought back from the grave,

> "Rescued from death by force though pale and faint,"

and restored to Admetus in a scene not unlike the ending of the *Winter's Tale*.

> "But all the time Alkestis moved not once
> Out of the set gaze and the silent smile;
> And a cold fear ran through Admetos' frame:
> 'Why does she stand and front me silent thus?'
> Heracles solemnly replied, 'Not yet
> Is it allowable thou hear the things
> She has to tell thee; let evanish quite
> That consecration to the lower gods
> And on our upper world the third day rise.'"[1]

The Medea

The *Medea* was the first play in a tetralogy that obtained the third prize in 431. The great sorceress of the Greek saga, a more baleful and more vindictive figure than her father's sister, Circe, the beguiler of men, Medea appears in the tragedy of Euripides, probably for the first time in literature, as the murderess of her children. The main outlines of the story, though not this murder, Euripides found in the Corinthian saga, and he chose the closing incidents of the Corinthian episode in Medea's life, and laid the scene before her house at Corinth. The play is a drama of jealousy and ruthless revenge, a picture of the excess of passion in a barbarian woman. Deserted by Jason, who is about to marry the Corinthian princess Glauce, threatened with exile for herself and her children, Medea prepares to destroy the princess and her father together. Like Deianira, but with no sentimental intention, she sends to the princess a bridal wreath and robe steeped in poison, for Medea is the typical poisoner of Greek legend. The robe proves a "shirt of Nessus," which consumes the bride, together with the king who tries to save her. To complete her vengeance on Jason, that he may be left utterly

[1] *Balaustion's Adventure.*

desolate, Medea now slays her two children, not indeed on the stage, but with an effect hardly less horrible to the audience who hear their cries in the house and their struggles to escape. Medea had arranged her own flight to Athens with King Aegeus, the father of Theseus, who happened conveniently to be passing through Corinth, and when Jason hurries in to save his children she is already out of his reach, suspended aloft in her winged chariot and carrying with her the bodies of the children which, with a last refinement of cruelty, she refuses to leave with their father. Earlier in the play the spectator's whole sympathy was centered in Medea. Even the chorus of women of Corinth side with her against her faithless husband. Jason, the cold and perfidious adventurer, strangely reckless of Medea's well-known power to harm, had met all her entreaties and reminders of their past with a sophistic subtlety in which he took evident pride. But, at the close, every spectator must have felt a reversal of feeling against the remorseless Medea and a movement of pity for Jason, whose agony at the sight of his murdered children is genuine. Medea, divided, as in the wonderful speech in the play (1021–1080), between a mother's love and her desire for a crushing revenge, and once more, in Ovid's phrase, following the worse,[1] or poised in her magic chariot with the dead children, was a favorite motive in later Greek and Roman art. In spite of the somewhat casual episode of Aegeus, and the supernatural exit of Medea, which has offended some critics, the play as a whole, both as regards structure and sustained tragic interest, is the masterpiece of Euripides.

The total absence of the gods from the action of the *Medea* is, to the modern reader, one of the excellences of the play. The sorceress needs no divine aid in laying her fatal snares, and no god intervenes to save Jason. He was to be left to the mercy of those magic powers which had once served him well. But in the

[1] video meliora proboque,
Deteriora sequor.
— *Met.* 7. 20.

Hippolytus (428) the gods pull the wires, and Phaedra, Hippolytus, and Theseus are puppets swayed to love, scorn, revenge, and remorse, according to the pleasure of Aphrodite and Artemis. Aphrodite, neglected by Hippolytus, the Amazon's son, tells in the prologue the plan of her revenge, how

The Hippolytus

> *that grievous and amazéd Queen,*
> *Wounded and wondering, with ne'er a word,*
> *Wastes slowly; and her secret none hath heard*
> *Nor dreamed. But never thus this love shall end.*
> *To Theseus' son some whisper will I send,*
> *And all be bare. And that proud prince, my foe,*
> *His sire shall slay with curses. Even so*
> *Endeth that boon the great Lord of the Main*
> *To Theseus gave, the Three Prayers not in vain.*
> *And she, not in dishonor, yet shall die.*[1]

In an earlier lost play, the *Hippolytus Veiled* (so-called, it is thought, because the youth veiled his face for shame at Phaedra's confession of her love), Euripides had offended Athenian taste by making his Phaedra too passionate, too outspoken; Phaedra as Seneca and Racine envisaged her later. In this second version which has outlived the first, the *Hippolytus with the Garland* (a reference to the wreath which he offers to Artemis), Phaedra exchanges no word with her stepson. It is from the officious nurse that Hippolytus learns what the queen has not the courage to declare. The tirade in which he expresses his horror and distrust of all women, "this novelty on earth, this fair defect of nature," has been imitated by Milton in *Paradise Lost*.[2] Phaedra belonged to a family whose loves had been unhallowed and disastrous. Her mother was Pasiphae of Crete, her sister Ariadne whom Theseus deserted on Naxos. And now she in her turn is the helpless victim of Aphrodite. Like Stheneboea, another of the heroines of Euripides, who slew herself when she was repulsed by Bellerophon, Phaedra dies, holding in her hands a written accu-

[1] 38–47, Murray's translation. [2] 10. 888 ff.

sation of Hippolytus, the appropriate revenge of a woman scorned.[1] Theseus refuses to hear his son's assertions of his innocence and drives him from the city. And now the "third prayer" is granted by Poseidon. A messenger, in a speech that closely resembles the narrative of the fatal chariot race in the *Electra* of Sophocles, brings the news that Hippolytus has been dragged to death by his frightened horses on the seashore. Then Artemis appears aloft, not to cut the knot, — for there is now no tragic complication, — but to clear the good name of her devotee, to reconcile father and son, and to give an atmosphere of serenity and tenderness to the last scene. *O breath of heavenly fragrance!* cries the dying youth, *even in my anguish I can feel thee and take rest.*[2] In this play Euripides uses an accessory chorus of huntsmen. They enter with Hippolytus in the first episode and sing a hymn to Artemis, whose statue stands near that of Aphrodite in front of the palace of Theseus at Troezen. The regular chorus of women of Troezen, like the chorus of the *Medea*, are in turn sympathetic and horror-stricken, but do not interfere to avert the death of their mistress or the doom of the innocent prince. The first half of the ode in which they sing of the power of love has been translated by Browning:

O Love, Love, thou that from the eyes diffusest
Yearning, and on the soul sweet grace inducest—
Souls against whom thy hostile march is made —
Never to me be manifest in ire,
Nor, out of time and tune, my peace invade!
Since neither from the fire —
No, nor the stars — is launched a bolt more mighty

[1] "Yet, ere she perished, blasted in a scroll
The fame of him her swerving made not swerve."
— BROWNING, *Artemis Prologizes.*

In this poem, in the style of a Euripidean prologue, Browning relates the story of the *Hippolytus*.

[2] According to a legend followed by Vergil, *Aen.* 7. 761 ff., and Ovid, *Met.* 15. 533 ff., Artemis restored Hippolytus to life. See also Browning, *Artemis Prologizes.*

Than that of Aphrodite
Hurled from the hands of Love, the boy with Zeus for ***sire.***
Idly, how idly, by the Alpheian river
And in the Pythian shrines of Phoebus, quiver
Blood offerings from the bull, which Hellas ***heaps;***
While Love we worship not — the Lord of ***men!***
Worship not him, the very key who keeps
Of Aphrodite, when
She closes up her dearest chamber portals:
— Love, when he comes to mortals,
Wide-wasting, through those deeps of woes beyond ***the deep!***

The Trojan Women

The *Trojan Women* (415) is a drama of a single situation, a reaction to the 'simple' type with a structure as devoid of complication as the *Suppliants* of Aeschylus, in which the interest is epic rather than dramatic. There is no intrigue, no reversal. The scene is the shore of the Troad on the day after the fall of Troy. The gods must always leave a fallen city. So they departed, with a great noise of their going, from Jerusalem, when it was taken by Titus.[1] And so now, in the prologue, Poseidon takes his leave of Troy, whose walls he had helped Apollo to build. Then follow scenes of desolation, such as those which moved Aeneas to tears when he saw them in bronze on the doors of Dido's temple of Juno at Carthage. There is nothing to lighten the gloom. Andromache bewails her disgrace as the captive of Pyrrhus, and the fate of Astyanax, who is still alive, though later in the play his body is carried in on his father's shield ; Cassandra, frenzied with grief and shame, sings a delirious monody, a wedding song for her nuptials with Agamemnon. The song and the speech that follows are partly a reminiscence of the matchless scene in the *Agamemnon*, and are full of sinister threats of the coming doom of the house of Atreus. What unity the play has is given by the person of Hecuba the protagonist, before whom all this procession of woe passes, to whom each fresh report of the insolence and cruelty of the Greeks brings a new and personal grief.

[1] Tacitus, *Histories* 5. 13.

The chorus of Trojan women is absorbed in a single theme, the fate of Troy, which burns in the background, the horrors of slavery for the women of a sacked city. The whole play is a dirge for Troy, but throughout is heard the note of disaster still to come, the Nemesis that lies in wait for the insolent Greeks.

The Helen

In the *Helen* (412) Euripides dramatized the legend of Helen in Egypt. The fantastic effort to rehabilitate Helen, *bewundert viel und viel gescholten*, had been made before Euripides. Stesichorus in his palinode had declared that she never went to Troy, that she was represented there by a phantom for whom the Greeks and Trojans fought, a type, said Plato, of those phantoms of pleasure for which the pleasure seeker strives in his ignorance of true delight.[1] Herodotus had told the story, omitting the phantom, in his second Book. Nevertheless Euripides must have surprised the Athenians when he forsook the familiar epic tradition and put on the stage this *new-fangled Helen*, as Aristophanes calls her,[2] who had lived in retreat in Egypt for seventeen years and is recovered there by Menelaus on his homeward voyage. Nothing could be more absurd than his situation when, after leaving one Helen (the phantom) on the shore, he is greeted by her double (the real woman) inland. Helen has learned the history of the Trojan war and her own part in it from Teucer, who crosses the stage, an exile from Salamis, on his way to found a new Salamis in Cyprus. The intrigue that is necessary to save Helen from the wooing of the king of Egypt and her flight with Menelaus are pure invention. Finally her brothers, the Dioscuri, appear as gods from the machine and reconcile the king to her loss.[3]

[1] *Republic* 586. Goethe borrowed the idea of a phantom Helen for the third act of the Second Part of *Faust*, which begins precisely like a play of Euripides.

[2] *Thesmoph.* 850. This comedy contains a number of quotations from the speeches of the *Helen*, and parodies of the *Helen*, and the *Andromeda*.

[3] Verrall's theory (in *Four Plays of Euripides*, 1905) that in the *Helen* Euripides parodies his *Iphigeneia among the Taurians* is ingeniously worked

In the same year as the *Helen* appeared the lost *Andromeda*, and it also was parodied by Aristophanes in the *Thesmophoriazousae* (411 B.C.). This is the play, a drama of the romantic love of Perseus for Andromeda, which so excited the people of Abdera one summer during the reign of Lysimachus, king of Thrace (306–281 B.C.), that they were smitten with a sort of tragedy fever. *The town*, says Lucian, who tells the story, not without malice, for the sluggish wits of Abdera were a proverb, *the town was filled with all those pale, thin, seven-day-old tragedians declaiming loudly O Love! lord of gods and men, the monody from the Andromeda, and part of the great speech of Perseus*, which they had lately heard on the stage.[1] Nor were these Euripidomaniacs cured of their distemper until the cold of a Thracian winter froze their enthusiasm.

The Andromeda

The *Orestes* was produced in 408, not long before Euripides left Athens for Macedonia. The popularity of this sensational and inconsequent drama was perhaps partly due to the fact that it provided the Athenians with an experience rare in their theater, the emotion of curiosity as to how the play would end. The scene is laid at Argos, immediately after the vengeance of Orestes. Once more Euripides breaks with the saga tradition. In his *Orestes* the Furies are but the hallucinations of a guilty man maddened by the stings of conscience, "unnatural troubles" bred of unnatural deeds. The scene in which Electra attempts to minister to this "mind diseased" is not unworthy to be ranked with the sleep-walking scene in the fifth act of *Macbeth*, as one of the finest pictures of remorse in literature. But a single

The Orestes

out and there is a modern parallel for a playwright parodying his own play. But in the absence of all external evidence it is not easy to follow Verrall when he asserts that the *Helen* was first played at a private celebration of the Thesmophoria on the island Macris, and "contains domestic allusions and in two most important personages represents the successive householders." There is no evidence whatever for private performances of plays that appeared at the Dionysia.

[1] *The Art of Writing History* 1.

effective episode will not save a play. The rest is improbable melodrama. Condemned to death, together with Electra, by the Argives, deserted by Menelaus on his arrival at Argos, Orestes, with the help of Pylades, kills Helen in revenge, and threatens to murder Hermione before the eyes of her father and the citizens who are besieging him in the palace. Apollo, appearing from the machine, has more than one knot to cut. He satisfies the demands of all, appeases Menelaus by recounting the apotheosis of Helen and assuring him that her dowry will be his, bids Orestes marry, not murder, Hermione, and gives Electra to Pylades.

The *Orestes* is full of novelties. Where Aeschylus or Sophocles would have seen an opening for one of those set speeches in iambic trimeter, by a messenger, which were among the most brilliant effects of Greek tragedy, Euripides introduces a descriptive monody by a Phrygian slave who, as he sang his account of the murder of Helen, expressed his agitation and terror with a wonderful variety of metrical effects.[1] There was much in the composition of the play that Aristotle must have disapproved.[2] But he contents himself with reproving Euripides for the unnecessary baseness of the character of Menelaus. The Athenians, on the other hand, certainly enjoyed, at the close of the fifth century, this picture of Spartan egotism and bad faith.

Those who attempt to arrange the undated plays in some sort of chronological order, rely partly on the parodies in Aristophanes, partly on the evidence of the meters. The arguments from the political atmosphere of certain of the plays are less trustworthy. In the tragedies produced after about 424 B.C. resolved iambics become more and more frequent. Trochaic tetrameters are used

[1] 1395 ff. Radermacher, in *Rhein. Mus.* 57, conjectures that Euripides borrowed the scene of the murder of Helen from comedy, and that the *Orestes*, like the *Alcestis*, was a tragi-comedy.

[2] The characters in the *Orestes* have not the elevation that is needed to inspire the hearer with pity and terror. It falls under Lamb's criticism of the sensationalism of the *Duchess of Malfi*. "Its terrors want dignity, its affrightments are without decorum."

in nine of the extant plays, and as the six of these whose date is known belong to the latest period of the poet's career, one is justified in concluding that the other three, the *Iphigeneia among the Taurians*, the *Ion*, and the *Mad Heracles*, are also of late date. Euripides, for the most part, reserved this meter for the expression of emotion and excitement, as in the *Mad Heracles*,[1] where Lyssa, Frenzy personified, describes how she will invade the breast of Heracles and destroy his house, or as when Cassandra, in the *Trojan Women*,[2] suddenly diverts her prophecy to her own fate and the terrible doom reserved for Agamemnon. In the *Bacchae*, the latest play, trochaic tetrameter is used throughout a whole scene,[3] the dialogue of Dionysus and the chorus after his escape, and two scenes in the *Orestes* (408 B.C.) are in this meter.

The Heracleidae

The *Heracleidae* is dated by some critics as early as 429, on account of its political tone. Its aim is, clearly, to exalt Athens at the expense of Argos and Sparta, an endeavor very appropriate to the first years of the Peloponnesian war. It is a drama of the persecution of the children of Heracles by Eurystheus, king of Argos, and of the war with Argos which Athens undertakes in defense of the refugees. A good many lines are lost, but the play was worth preserving, if only for the fine speeches of Macaria,[4] the daughter of Heracles, a more consistently heroic Iphigeneia, who of her free will gives her life to secure the safety of her kindred and the victory over Argos.

The Andromache

The *Andromache* (430–424 B.C.?) does not appear in the theater records (didascaliae) and was either never acted on the Athenian stage, or, as is more likely, was brought out under the name of one Timocrates or Democrates. The play is a sequel to the *Orestes*. Hermione, the daughter of Menelaus, married to Neoptolemus, plots in his absence to murder the captive Andromache and the child of her captivity, Molossus. In this she is abetted by Menelaus, who is visiting Phthia, the home of his son-in-law. Euripides wished to emphasize the conviction of the Athenians that the Spartans are all bad, all treacher-

[1] 858–873. [2] 444–461. [3] 604–641. [4] 500–534, 574–596.

ous,[1] and he makes Menelaus as cruel and faithless as his daughter is jealous and cowardly. In the first half of the play Andromache and her son are rescued by the arrival of the aged Peleus. In the second, which is almost wholly disconnected, Orestes comes to Phthia and persuades Hermione to elope with him, a step which he has made safe by arranging for the murder of Neoptolemus at Delphi. Pindar in his *Seventh Nemean* had given a version of the death of Neoptolemus at Delphi; the plot of Orestes was an invention of Euripides. The play closes with the appearance of Thetis, who, in Euripidean fashion, decrees the apotheosis of her mortal husband Peleus, and gives Andromache in marriage to Helenus. They are to rule in Epirus, and there Aeneas finds them in Vergil's sequel to the *Andromache*.[2] The play is among the poorest of Euripides. Andromache and Peleus, alone, are respectable and dignified; the rest are as repulsive as Euripides could make them.

The Hecuba

The *Hecuba* is parodied by Aristophanes in the *Clouds*[3] (423 B.C.), so that 424, or a little earlier, is a likely date for its appearance. As in the *Trojan Women*, to which it is a sequel, Hecuba is the protagonist. The scene is laid in the Thracian Chersonese, visited by the Greeks as they return home with their Trojan captives. The prologue is spoken by the ghost of Polydorus, Hecuba's son, who has been treacherously slain by Polymestor, king of Thrace, a victim of the king's accursed lust for gold, *auri sacra fames*. Vergil imitates Euripides when he makes Aeneas, too, land in Thrace, in his flight from Troy; he hears the voice of Polydorus from the grave, warning him to *flee this cruel land, this greedy shore*.[4] Two main episodes divide the interest of the *Hecuba*. The first is the sacrifice of Polyxena, daughter of Priam, to the shade of Achilles, who, even from the tomb, claims his share of the spoil.[5] This is an opening for one of those scenes of maiden heroism so dear to the Greek tragedians. Polyxena, like Antigone, like Macaria, has little to lose by death,

[1] *Andromache* 445 ff.
[2] *Aen.* 3. 294 ff.
[3] Cp. *Hecuba* 171 with *Clouds* 1165.
[4] *Aen.* 3. 40 ff.
[5] Catullus 64. 362.

and she shows none of the weakness that was so natural in the case of Iphigeneia. In the second part of the play Hecuba takes her revenge on Polymestor; she lures him into her tent, slays his children, and puts out his eyes. The play is a series of scenes of heartrending emotion, of cruel slaughter, death following death. It was always a favorite, but owes its success rather to beauties of detail than to excellence of structure.

The *Suppliants* was produced about 421 B.C., and has the same patriotic tendency as the *Heracleidae*. It is a picture of Athens as the asylum of the Argives when they had failed in the expedition against Thebes. The Thebans refused burial to the slain Argives and are compelled by the Athenians to give up the bodies. The play seems to have been inspired by the defeat of the Athenian army at Delium (424 B.C.), and the refusal of the Thebans to surrender the Athenian dead, so that Euripides was reminding the audience of their own recent griefs, while he recommended friendly ties between Argos and Athens. In the speech of the herald from Thebes, forbidding Athens to harbor the Argives, there is a clear echo of the description of Capaneus in the *Seven against Thebes* of Aeschylus.[1] Capaneus the scornful, whom Dante[2] saw in Hell, heedless of the fiery rain and still defying the gods, had been slain by the thunderbolt of Zeus as he assaulted Thebes. In the funeral pageant of the Argives with which the *Suppliants* closes, Euripides brings the pyre of Capaneus on the stage, and the most sensational moment of this spectacular play is that when his wife Evadne flings herself on to the blazing pile that they may be consumed together, the only instance of suttee in Greek tragedy. Very rare, to judge from the extant plays, must have been a chorus of old women such as Euripides brought on the scene in the *Suppliants*, those bereaved mothers of the seven chiefs, who give its name to this drama. Dramatic etiquette seems to have excluded, as a rule, old women and young men from the chorus.

The Suppliants

[1] Cp. *Suppliants* 494 ff. with *Seven against Thebes* 425 ff. [2] *Inferno* 14.

The *Mad Heracles* (423–420?) is the only extant Greek drama, except the *Trachiniae* of Sophocles, in which Heracles plays a leading rôle. Which of these two plays was produced first and suggested the other is quite uncertain. Euripides introduced more than one novelty into his version of the madness of Heracles. In the Heracles saga as he found it in the *Cypria*, where Nestor described to Menelaus the afflictions of Heracles, and in Stesichorus, the fit of madness in which the hero murdered his children came early in his career, at any rate before the Twelve Labors which are recited by the chorus of Theban elders in this play. Euripides makes the madness fall on Heracles at the close of all these toils and successes, a crushing blow from the implacable Hera who had so often had to see the hated son of Alcmene escape unscathed. Amphitryon, the mortal father of Heracles, a typical old man of the stage, who clings to life and refuses to despair with the younger Megara, is the link that connects the two parts of the action, since he is the only character present throughout. In the first part, Megara, the wife of Heracles, and her three sons are about to be slain by Lycus the Euboean who has usurped the throne of Thebes in the absence of Heracles. Lycus is an invention of Euripides. Heracles arrives from his last expedition, the rescue of Theseus from Hades, in time to save his family, and kills Lycus. And now, when all their troubles seem to be over, the anger of Hera begins to work. On the threshold of the house stands Lyssa, the fury of madness, snakes in her hair and a torch in her hand, and describes in rapid trochaics the mischief that she is sent to inflict on those within. A messenger in a long set speech next relates the event, how, on a sudden, a madness like that of Ajax fell on Heracles, how in the frenzy of his delusion he slew his children, thinking them to be the children of his taskmaster, Eurystheus. Megara, too, had fallen a victim. Amphitryon was saved only by the intervention of Athene. The eccyclema presently reveals Heracles lying in a heavy stupor among the slain. He awakes sane, and slowly, like Agave in the *Bacchae*, is convinced of the monstrous truth. Like Ajax, his first

The Mad Heracles

thought is of suicide. Euripides now abandons the Oetaean saga, with its tale of the pyre of Heracles on Oeta lit by Philoctetes, and transplants Heracles, *full fraught with griefs — no space for more*,[1] to Athens, the haven, in the Athenian drama, of the unhappy and the exiled.

The Ion

For the date of the *Ion* there is no evidence, though the use, in three passages, of trochaic tetrameters may be taken as a sign of lateness. Ion, the temple servant of Apollo at Delphi, is, in fact, as Hermes explains in the prologue, the son of the god himself and Creousa, an Athenian princess. Creousa has kept her secret, abandoned the child, and is now married to Xuthus, an Athenian soldier of fortune. With him she comes to consult the oracle, and the first episode is a touching encounter between mother and son, in which each, confiding in the other, reveals part of the truth but not enough for recognition. Meanwhile Xuthus interprets too literally a response of the oracle, and claims Ion as his son. Creousa, in her jealousy of this adoption, tries to poison Ion, who is saved by an accident. The situation is now complicated enough. A mother has tried to murder her son, and in his turn he is resolved to punish her with death. The recognition that follows brings with it a complete reversal for all. Creousa recognizes Ion as her son through the baby necklace, the shawl, and other tokens that are part of the conventional outfit of an exposed infant and had been preserved by the Pythian priestess. Apollo has pulled the wires all through the play. He had brought the mother and son to Delphi, given the misleading oracle to Xuthus, sent out the Pythia in the nick of time with the tokens of Ion. At the close, ashamed to appear himself, he sends Pallas to confirm the parentage of Ion[2] and to bid him go to Athens to become the ancestor of the Ionian race. The drama is sensational, rather than tragic, and has little about it that is genuinely affecting. It is constructed with much ingenuity and some lack of seriousness.

[1] 1245. The line is quoted by Longinus (40) to show how a writer not naturally sublime, may, by sheer art of arrangement, secure elevation to the most ordinary phrase.

[2] 1558.

But it will always be read for the sake of certain fine passages, the morning hymn of Ion as he sweeps the temple steps, the entrance of the chorus of Athenian women who admire and describe the paintings (or reliefs?) of the labors of Heracles on the front of the temple, an incident which perhaps suggested to Vergil the far finer scene of Aeneas confronted with the pictures of the Trojan war on the temple at Carthage, and to Herodas, his *Mime, Women at the Temple of Asclepius*. Talfourd in his *Ion* (1836) borrowed much from Euripides, but transferred the story to Argos, and gave his play a very different *dénouement*.

The *Electra* (*circa* 413?) almost certainly preceded the *Helen* (412 B.C.); the speech of the Dioscuri at the close announces the coming from Egypt of Helen, whose phantom, not herself, had been the cause of strife at Troy.[1] More than once the three great tragic poets of Athens chose the same theme from the heroic saga, and the Athenians could compare their individual manner of painting the same characters and handling the same general plot, as Dio Chrysostom read and compared the three versions of the Philoctetes legend.[2] In a single instance we can do the same. The *Choephori* of Aeschylus, the *Electra* of Sophocles, the *Electra* of Euripides, all deal with the same situation, the return of Orestes and his vengeance on his mother and Aegisthus. All these dramatists had to devise an altercation between Electra and her mother, a recognition of Orestes and Electra, and a trap for the cautious pair who lived always in dread of such an issue; and they must close the drama, either with a scene of remorse, as the Furies begin to hunt Orestes, or with a justification of a deed that Apollo himself had ordained. Euripides, writing last,[3] is at all points inferior to the other two. In no other play is he so subjective, so indifferent to the beauty and horror of the

The Electra

[1] 1281. [2] *Oration* 52.

[3] See the argument of Jebb, in his Introduction to the *Electra* of Sophocles, opposing the thesis of Wilamowitz in *Hermes* 18, *Die beiden Elektren*, that Sophocles wrote his *Electra* as a protest against the sordid realism of the *Electra* of Euripides.

heroic saga. The scene is laid, not before the palace of Atreus, the only fitting background for the last crime of the house, but in the country, near the rustic cottage where Electra lives with the countryman to whom her mother has given her in marriage. Nothing could be less appropriate to the Atreus saga than this setting of rural simplicity, with the menial tasks of Electra, and the countryman's embarrassment for supplies on the arrival of a guest. In the recognition scene, Euripides allowed himself a direct criticism of the device of Aeschylus in the *Choephori*. An old man produces a lock of hair from the king's tomb, and suggests that there may be further proof of the arrival of Orestes from the footprints and the garment that Electra herself had woven for her brother. All this Electra carefully explains to be impossible and absurd. In the end, Orestes is recognized by a scar on his forehead. For Euripides, as for Sophocles, Electra is the ruthless protagonist, but even more bloodthirsty; she takes an active part in her mother's death, and, as she boasts, steadies the sword of Orestes with her own unshaking hand.[1] It is Orestes throughout who is shaken and overwhelmed by the horror of the deed. Euripides wished to leave the impression that, under any provocation, it is odious to kill one's mother, and unworthy of Apollo to urge a son to such a crime.[2] With this aim he even showed[3] the softer side of Clytemnestra, who hints to Electra that she suffers from remorse. The Dioscuri appear, at the close, to dispatch Orestes to Athens for purification, and from them only comes a hint of the approaching Furies; Electra is given in marriage to Pylades.

The *Iphigeneia among the Taurians* (414–412 B.C. ?) was composed before the play whose story it continues, the *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, one of the two posthumous works of Euripides. Iphigeneia,

[1] "While one hand, Electra's, pulls the door behind, made fast On fate,— the other strains, prepared to push The victim-queen, should she make frightened pause Before that serpentining blood which steals Out of the darkness where, a pace beyond, Above the slain Aigisthos, bides his blow Dreadful Orestes."— BROWNING, *Aristophanes' Apology*.

[2] 1245, 1302.

[3] 1105.

saved from the sacrifice at Aulis by Artemis, as was described by the poet of the *Cypria*, had been transported to the northern shores of the Euxine to be the priestess of Artemis in the barbarous cult of the Taurians, an inhospitable race who sacrificed to their Greek goddess all Greeks caught on their coasts.[1] Orestes is sent to this remote place by Artemis herself to carry her statue to Athens, as part of the expiation of his mother's death. He is about to be sacrificed by his sister, when their recognition is brought about by a device which Aristotle himself admired, though not without reserve.[2] He praised the device of the letter which revealed Iphigeneia to Orestes; nothing could be better; but he thought the methods of Orestes, who simply told his sister who he was, 'lacking in art'; for the ingenious artist will allow nothing to seem arbitrary, and Euripides falls beneath himself when he uses tokens, as in the recognition of Ion, or a simple assertion of identity. Polyidus, a later tragedian, hit on a good device; he brought Orestes to the altar, under the very knife, and, as Iphigeneia was in the act to strike, her victim cried, 'So I too must die at the altar like my sister!' A very natural reflection, says Aristotle, approvingly.[3] In the present play, the intrigue of the brother and sister to escape from Thoas, the king of the Taurians, is not unlike the strategy of Helen and Menelaus in the *Helen*. Goethe's famous *Iphigenie auf Tauris*, composed first in prose and later (1786) in verse, is essentially different from the Greek original, both in the conduct of the action and the painting of the character. Like certain French imitators of the *Iphigeneia among the Taurians*, Goethe introduced a romantic motive; his Thoas is enamored of Iphigeneia, but is too magnanimous to detain her; his Iphigeneia is too generous to deceive Thoas, a situation foreign to the ideas of a Greek dramatist.

The Iphigeneia among the Taurians

[1] . . . "at Taurica, Where now a captive priestess, she alway Mingles her tender grave Hellenic speech With theirs, tuned to the hailstone-beaten beach. . . ." — BROWNING, *Waring*.

[2] *Poetics* 16.

[3] *ib.* 16.

The title of the *Phoenician Women* (413–407 B.C. ?) conveys no hint of its subject. It is as though Euripides, having strung together a number of episodes connected with the expedition of the seven chiefs against Thebes, would not commit himself as to the main interest of his play, and so took his title from the chorus, a group of women of Tyre who are complete outsiders as regards the action, but happen to be passing through Thebes at the time of the fatal assault. The play is a series of effective scenes. Antigone, like Helen on the wall in the third Book of the *Iliad*, stands with an old attendant on the ramparts of Thebes, and gazes at the leaders of the Argives; she is moved especially by the sight of her favorite brother, Polynices, whom Euripides presently brings on to the stage for the sake of confronting him with Eteocles, his fierce and unscrupulous brother. Euripides abandoned the Homeric and Sophoclean version of the end of Jocasta, reserving her suicide for the moment when all her efforts at reconciliation have failed and the two brothers have fallen in their duel. Oedipus, too, appears in the *Phoenician Women*, a blind and broken old man whose exile with Antigone follows on the death of the sons whom his curse has slain. A single character, Eteocles, dominated the *Seven against Thebes* of Aeschylus, played some sixty years earlier. Euripides avoided any imitation of its action, crowded his play with half a dozen characters that Aeschylus had ignored, and emphasized the difference of his version by a side thrust at those fine speeches describing the fourteen champions, which are the central interest of the *Seven against Thebes*. *To tell the name of each were waste of time*, says the Eteocles of Euripides,[1] *now when the enemy is before the walls.*

The Phoenician Women

The *Rhesus*, if genuine, should stand first in a chronological account of the plays, since, if Euripides wrote it, it is his least mature work. Influenced, perhaps, by the interest of Athens in Thrace, in those years when she was trying to found Amphipolis (*circa* 436),

[1] *Phoenician Women* 751.

Euripides certainly wrote a *Rhesus*. But the authorship of the *Rhesus* that has come down under his name is an open question to which the most competent scholars continue to give contradictory answers. Any argument from its general inferiority to every other extant Greek tragedy may be put aside, since we cannot say how inferior to himself, on occasion, might be the poet of nearly a hundred plays, of which we can estimate less than a score. The arguments from style are inconclusive, and have been used equally by those who assert and those who deny that Euripides is the author. The skeptics at present have the advantage of numbers, but no one has been able to produce a single proof. The play has been assigned in turn to almost every period in which the Greeks wrote tragedy. But since its author caught the manner of Euripides and wrote lyrics not unworthy of him, the safest theory seems to be that which places the *Rhesus* early in the fourth century. It would then be written by some eclectic imitator, perhaps Euripides the younger, who was not too far removed from the best traditions of the drama. The play is a dramatization of the tenth Book of the *Iliad*, the *Doloneia* cut up into acts. The scene is laid in the Trojan camp on the very night when Rhesus king of Thrace has come with his army and his famous horses to aid the Trojans. Under cover of night Odysseus and Diomede slay the king and drive away his horses, *before ever they had tasted the fodder of Troy, or drunk of the Xanthus*, says Vergil,[1] seizing, as usual, this opening for pathos. In the *Rhesus* there is, however, little of the pathetic effect for which Euripides was famous, though there is the usual tragic contrast between the boasts of the Thracian king, heard with chagrin by Hector, that he will overcome with ease the champion of the Greeks, and that inglorious end which the spectators could forecast. In these scenes from the epic, Athene aids the enterprise of the Greek heroes after the epic rather than the dramatic fashion. At the close, Terpsichore the Muse, the mother of Rhesus, appears aloft as a goddess

The Rhesus

[1] *Aen.* 1. 472.

from the machine, not to cut a tragic knot, for there is no such dilemma, but to sing an exquisite dirge for her murdered son.[1] Where the highest point of interest is the killing of an enemy, there is no room for tragic pity or terror; the whole situation is better suited to epic. The *Rhesus*, like the *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, has no prologue.[2]

The *Cyclops* (of uncertain date) is interesting solely as the only extant example of a satyric play. In the half century or more that separates this work of Euripides from the satyric pieces of Pratinas and Aeschylus, the satyric drama seems to have developed precisely along the lines of regular tragedy. The *Cyclops*, at any rate, has all the essential features of tragic structure, a prologue, a parodos, four episodes separated by choral lyrics. But all these are so abridged that the whole amounts only to some 700 lines, about half the length of the average tragedy. One of the problems of the writer of a satyric piece was how to bring the satyr chorus of Dionysus into connection with a plot taken from the heroic saga. In the *Cyclops*, the satyrs, as they sailed with Silenus in quest of Dionysus, the wandering god, have been cast ashore on Sicily, the home of Polyphemus, who has enslaved them to his service. Their tasks, the flocks which they drive on the stage, the abundance of cheese and milk in the cave of the Cyclops, the background of the play, lend even to this coarse piece of buffoonery something of that idyllic atmosphere which, since Theocritus, has seemed the peculiar charm of Sicily. All that concerns Silenus and the satyrs is the invention of Euripides. The rest is a dramatization of the ninth Book of the *Odyssey*, the adventure of Odysseus in Sicily, the blinding of the one-eyed Cyclops, and the escape of the resourceful hero. The *Cyclops* leaves the impression that we have lost little by the disappearance of the satyric drama. But in any case Euripides was not the man

The Cyclops

[1] 894–903, 906–914.

[2] Among modern scholars Wilamowitz, Croiset, and Christ deny, Sittl and Sitzler defend, the genuineness of the *Rhesus*.

to be coarse with the necessary gusto. The Aeschylean imagination let loose must have produced something very different from this play, which could be converted into a tragedy of the tamest, simplest type by the omission of the wild satyr dance, the Sikinnis, from the parodos, and a dozen indecent lines scattered through the play. The *Cyclops* has been admirably translated by Shelley.

Had Euripides written nothing during his exile, or had the *Iphigeneia at Aulis* and the *Bacchae* failed to survive, he would have been named in the history of literature as a poet whose flame of inspiration had burned fitfully at the last. If the plays produced at Athens in the last decade of his life, plays such as the *Orestes* and the *Helen*, were the only examples of his latest manner, we might speak with assurance of his earlier and stronger style and its obvious decadence. In the competition of Aeschylus and Euripides in the *Frogs* (405 B.C.), Aristophanes makes Aeschylus complain that he is at a disadvantage in the underworld compared with Euripides: *My poetry survived me; his died with him, so that he has it here to quote.*[1] The witticism loses much of its point when one remembers that, in the very year of the *Frogs*, two posthumous plays of Euripides were brought out at Athens by his son, the *Iphigeneia at Aulis* and the *Bacchae*. In these is at least no sign of falling off.

The story of *Iphigeneia at Aulis* (405) Euripides found in the *Cypria*. Aeschylus and Sophocles had each written his *Iphigeneia*, but of their plays we know little or nothing. The sacrifice of Iphigeneia that the ships might sail to Troy was described in a chorus of the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus, but with no hint of the happy ending given to the tale by Euripides. The scene is laid in the Greek camp at Aulis with Agamemnon as protagonist. His grief and hesitation, the protests of Clytemnestra, the resentment and pity of Achilles, the terror of Iphigeneia, make up a series of situations well suited to the genius of Euripides. His Iphigeneia throws off her weakness, and

The Iphigeneia at Aulis

[1] 868.

at the last devotes herself to the cause of Greece. Aristotle reproved him for this inconsistency of her character.[1] But to the modern reader who remembers Landor's beautiful imitation of the scene, this sudden exaltation of Iphigeneia is no blemish.[2] The sacrifice itself and the famous gesture with which Agamemnon veiled his head, which suggested to the painter Timanthes (*circa* 400 B.C.) his celebrated picture of the scene, is described by a messenger. Iphigeneia is snatched from the very altar by Artemis, who carries her off to be her priestess among the Taurians. The prologue spoken by Artemis, which Euripides probably wrote for this play, has been lost. The chorus is composed of women of Chalcis who have crossed the Euripus to see the sights of the Greek camp, and naturally enough observe all these pathetic scenes without profound emotion. The *Iphigeneia at Aulis* inspired Racine to write one of his finest plays.

The Bacchae

The *Bacchae* (*Bacchanals*), which Goethe and Macaulay thought the finest of the tragedies of Euripides, is drawn from the Theban saga of Dionysus. Aeschylus, who lived closer to the dithyrambic beginnings of tragedy, had devoted three trilogies to the Dionysus legends. He had dramatized both the stories of the vengeance of the youthful god on those two kings who had rejected his ritual, Lycurgus of Thrace, who in his madness slew his son, and Pentheus of Thebes, slain by his mother Agave in her Dionysiac frenzy. His lost *Pentheus* must have dealt with the same situation as the *Bacchae*. Sophocles alludes to the fate of Lycurgus in a chorus of the *Antigone*, but does not mention Pentheus. The *Bacchae* of Euripides, apart from the brief tale of the death of Pentheus in the twenty-sixth *Idyl* of Theocritus, is the only monument in Greek literature of this legend of the house of

[1] *Poetics* 15.

[2] "'O father! I am young and very happy. I do not think the pious Calchas heard Distinctly what the goddess spake.' . . . She lookt up and saw The fillet of the priest and calm cold eyes. Then turned she where her parent stood, and cried 'O father! grieve no more: the ships can sail.'" *Agamemnon and Iphigeneia.*

Cadmus. It is, besides, the *locus classicus* for the revels, the intoxication, the wild ecstasy of the Maenads

"Crowned with green leaves, and faces all on flame."

The chorus is composed of those untiring Bacchanals who were the inseparable *cortège* of Dionysus in tragedy and lyric, as his satyrs were appropriate to the satyric drama and comedy. The Maenads in the *Bacchae* come from Asia, wearing fawnskins and wreaths of ivy, and playing strange foreign instruments, cymbals, tambourines, and pipes. Dionysus, son of Semele and Zeus, comes leading them from Asia to Thebes, the scene of his mother's travail and fiery death. At first he is not known, even to the chorus, as the god himself, but plays the part of one who goes before to prepare the way for the coming of Dionysus. Near the palace of Pentheus, before which the scene is laid, is the tomb of Semele, lit up with a mysterious symbolic blaze which burns brighter when her son asserts his power. The relief of the ludicrous is given by Cadmus and the seer Teiresias. This aged pair follow the example of the women of the city whom Agave, the queen mother, has led away into the mountains to celebrate the new rites of Dionysus; they put on the dress appropriate to the god's votaries, and, in spite of old age and blindness, totter from the stage to join the worshipers. Pentheus, son of Semele's sister Agave, returning from an absence, is scandalized by the strange madness that has seized the women of Thebes, his mother, his grandfather, and even the Theban seer. He binds and imprisons the effeminate stranger, cuts his long hair, and forbids the worship of this new divinity in Thebes. Dionysus, with portents of fire and earthquake, easily releases himself. And now begins the punishment of Pentheus the infatuated. *Quem deus vult perdere dementat prius.* The god casts his spell over the unhappy king and persuades him to go to the mountains to see with his own eyes the secret ritual of the Maenads, whose doings have been reported at length by a messenger. From the moment of the imprisonment of Dionysus, Pentheus acts like a man fey, only half conscious of his own acts. He comes out

of the palace arrayed in the dress of a Bacchanal, raving of two suns in the sky and of his own supernatural strength, and so is led out to his doom by the god. The chorus all this time remain on the stage, and soon a messenger relates to them the terrible end of Pentheus, torn in pieces like a wild beast by the hands of the Maenads and his mother. Presently Agave enters carrying on the point of her thyrsus the head of her son, a 'young lion' that she has slain in the mountains: *Would that my son like me were happy in his hunting! Call him hither to see me and my good fortune face to face.*[1] Euripides is at his best in describing scenes of madness, the delirium of Orestes, or the ravings of Agave. For the queen the reversal of the situation comes as her reason gradually returns, and "she wakes up at last to find the real face turned up towards the mother and murderer." The speech, with her lament which must have balanced in length the lament of Cadmus over the mutilated body of Pentheus (1301–1326), has been lost from our manuscripts. When the manuscripts begin again, Dionysus from the machine is announcing their fate of exile and wandering to Cadmus and his aged wife Harmonia, who are to be changed into serpents. Agave, too, must depart with her sisters from Thebes.

Pentheus discovered by the Maenads, and Agave carrying her son's head, were favorite subjects for reliefs and vase paintings. But no work of art has so deeply impressed the imagination with the horror of the Pentheus legend as an anecdote of the performance of the *Bacchae* among the Parthians in the first century B.C. After the defeat of Crassus at Carrhae (53 B.C.), the Roman general's head was sent to the Parthian king Orodes in his camp. It happened that a famous actor, Jason of Tralles, was playing the part of Pentheus before the king, when the horrible trophy arrived. He immediately assumed the rôle of Agave, and held in his hand the head of Crassus while he sang: *Lo! we bring*

[1] She comes *bringing not Pentheus but repentance*, says Theocritus (26), echoing the pun in the play (367).

from the mountains to our halls this vine shoot, newly cut, our happy quarry.[1]

It is natural to see, with Pater,[2] in the *Bacchae*, this "masque of spring," an "*amende honorable* to the once slighted traditions of Greek belief," as though the close of the poet's life, that peaceful last chapter in Macedonia, far from the rivalries and defeats of Athens, had been a last act of reconciliation, like the serene ending of some Greek drama. 'When Euripides speaks his mind,' says one of the interlocutors in Lucian's *Zeus the Tragedian*, 'he betrays his real opinion of the gods.' Sophocles had raised no uncomfortable doubts. When his personages blaspheme, they blaspheme in character, like Jocasta or Ajax, and their utterances no more reflect the mind of Sophocles than the execrations of Prometheus against Zeus, 'the new tyrant,' record the true sentiments of Aeschylus. But Euripides has put himself into his plays, and no one can read them without detecting the restless spirit of the skeptic. He is not to be thought of as a pupil of the sophists; he was born too soon for that; but in the matter of the gods he evidently shared the skepticism of Protagoras. It was said of him that he was a realist, painted men 'as they are.' More than that, he painted the gods as they are in all the saga stories and theogonies, pitiless, revengeful, treacherous, sordid, with all the worst faults of men. When his personages talk of the gods they rarely add those saving clauses to justify divine ways, or those assertions of unshaken piety which give a reassuring atmosphere of orthodoxy to the plays of Aeschylus and Sophocles. There is, as usual, a basis of truth under the persiflage of Aristophanes. Euripides did expose the gods and criticise the legends, and in doing so he offended the taste as well as the piety of the Athenians. A large audience is always orthodox, and a fifth-century audience at Athens was the last to listen complacently to such

[1] *Bacchae* 1169; Plutarch, *Life of Crassus* 33.

[2] For an excellent description of the *Bacchae* and a translation of the messenger's speech with its picture of the Maenads on the mountains, see his *Greek Studies*.

a saying as Hecuba's :[1] *The Gods! It is only by a convention that we believe in them.*[2] But the *Bacchae*, at least, allows us to cherish a picture of the aged Euripides, with "calm of mind, all passion spent," acquiescing at last in the hallowed, the conventional view of the tone that befitted a poet of the theater of Dionysus, whatever might be his private convictions.

The saga

Euripides, like Sophocles, though, according to the etiquette of the theater he competed with four plays, did not write trilogies with a connected subject, after the fashion of Aeschylus. The Trojan saga inspired him with only nine tragedies, of which six are extant. For several of these he drew on the *Cypria*. From this poem he borrowed the subject of an early, lost play, the *Telephus* (438 B.C.), the story of the wounded Mysian king who comes to Mycenae disguised as a beggar in rags, and is unmasked by Odysseus. Telephus was the first and most famous of those ragged heroes, Menelaus in Egypt, Oeneus, Phoenix, Bellerophon, and the rest, whom Aristophanes found so amusing.[3]

The Attic, Theban, Argive, Corinthian, Thessalian, and Cretan sagas all furnished Euripides with subjects, and he handled their legends with the greatest freedom. Sophocles had resuscitated Haemon that he might die with Antigone. In the lost *Antigone* of Euripides the heroine does not die ; she is pardoned and married to Haemon. So, too, his Iphigeneia is not really sacrificed, but is preserved to be discovered by Orestes among the Taurians. His Helen is not murdered after all, but translated to the skies. For Euripides, in this not unlike the writers of the later, weaker epic, preferred a happy ending, a softening of the story. The very dialectic for which his plays are famous was in its tendency

[1] *Hecuba* 801.

[2] Verrall, in his *Euripides the Rationalist*, says of the *Alcestis*, *Ion*, etc., that "this is a type of dramatic work whose meaning lies entirely in innuendo," a cleverly veiled attack on religion. But the fact is that when, as Lucian says, Euripides speaks his mind, he speaks out.

[3] *Acharnians* 418 ff.

optimistic, and therefore alien to the spirit of tragedy, as Nietzsche has pointed out. For the tragic is something blind and irresistible, that cannot be reasoned away. When Clytemnestra argues like a barrister pleading for the life of Iphigeneia,[1] and makes out an excellent case against the policy of Agamemnon, she is by so much the less a tragic figure as her logic is unanswerable. Such speeches as hers are too common in Euripides, and are the suicide of tragedy. "His genius," said the late Sir Richard Jebb of Euripides, "was at discord with the form in which he worked."[2] What we must always regret is that he regularly subdued himself to the conventions of tragedy and used the old tragic themes. If he had had the power to abandon the saga and bring on the stage fictions of his own, as was done once at least in his own day by Agathon, we should have had a tragic counterpart of Menander. As it is, his dramas, for all their beauties, creak and strain under the weight of the saga and lie open to the interpretations of the over-ingenious.

Euripides had to wait for his popularity and, when it came, it was a tribute not to any tragic grandeur of manner or assured perfection of form. We hear nothing of Aeschylomania nor a sentimental infatuation of whole cities with the plays of Sophocles. But even in the lifetime of Euripides, the Sicilians, according to Plutarch, freed any Athenian prisoner of war who could recite some verses of their favorite poet. It is less likely that Lysander[3] and his Spartans were really diverted from the complete destruction of Athens by "sad Electra's poet." But Euripidomania there was, and not only the foolish frenzy that Lucian ridiculed at Abdera. Euripides had never lost a chance to praise Attica and Athens, the haven of the oppressed, where *men are fed on all the glories of the arts, and move delicately through that clearest*

[1] *Iphigeneia at Aulis* 1146–1208.

[2] Whibley's *Companion to Greek Studies*, p. 115.

[3] The story of Lysander, softened by the recital of the *Electra* of Euripides, is told by Browning at the close of *Aristophanes' Apology*.

air.[1] During his lifetime his reward had been slight. He had had to see his theater prefer, at almost every competition, the tragedies of his dead rival Aeschylus, or of Sophocles his contemporary. But with the rise of the comedy of manners in the century after his death the current set strongly in favor of a poet to whom the writers of New Comedy, especially Menander, owed much. He had been persecuted by the ridicule of the conservative Aristophanes; but the most extravagant tribute of the Euripidomaniacs was the utterance of a comic poet, three generations after his death: *If I believed*, said Philemon, *that the dead still have consciousness, I would hang myself to see Euripides*.[2] The taste of the fourth century and of the centuries that followed was not offended by that New Music of his (no longer new), with its monodies and trills. An austere critic like Aristotle might feel that one who could so brilliantly do without the gods from the machine, when he chose, ought not to have dragged them in so persistently; his fondness for prologues, explanations, or arguments of the action which became, with him, an integral part of the play itself, the care he took to make the art of prologue writing peculiarly his own, may have seemed as mysterious to some of his admirers as to ourselves. But even Aristotle, who illustrates most of the errors of tragic poets from the plays of Euripides, calls him 'the most tragic,'[3] an epithet which cancels a multitude of criticisms. His popularity, when it came, was due to that. His plays were the most moving, the most pathetic, the most human, that were seen on the Greek stage.

The minor tragic poets of the fifth century need not be dragged by us from the obscurity into which they were thrown in their own time by the dazzling excellence of the incomparable Three. Ion of Chios, who was successful in dithyramb as well as tragedy, Achaeus of Eretria, who won a reputation for satyric drama, are

[1] *Medea* 824–845, a chorus in which he forestalled the famous praise of Attica, the "swan song of Athens," in the *Oedipus at Colonus*.

[2] *fr.* 130 Kock.

[3] *Poetics* 13.

to us merely names. AGATHON, however, whose *floruit* falls much later than theirs, since he began to exhibit in 416, rises above the crowd of minor dramatists, not so much through his dramatic genius as in virtue of an extraordinary personal charm which made even Aristophanes indulgent to this decadent and effeminate poet. He and his lyrics are ridiculed in the *Thesmophoriazousae*, and, if we may believe the scholiast, Aristophanes devoted the lost *Gerytades* to a satire of his style. But his last word about Agathon is indulgent and even tender. It is uncertain whether, when Aristophanes regretted the loss of Agathon, the 'excellent poet' in the *Frogs* (85), he was alluding to his death or only to the fact that he had, like Euripides, retired to the court of Archelaus in Macedonia. At any rate we hear no more of Agathon, and may suppose that his career was short. Plato made him the host of the *Symposium*, which is supposed to be held in honor of Agathon's first victory in 416, and gives us from his lips a charming speech in praise of love. This was the more appropriate since Agathon in his *Anthos* (Flower) or *Antheus* was the first, as we learn from Aristotle, to write a tragedy on a purely fictitious theme, a love story, we may assume, forsaking the conventional myths.[1] Another innovation was the use of choral lyrics that had no relation to the subject of the play.[2] Aristotle frequently refers to Agathon, and usually with approval. We have a few titles of his plays. His style was strongly influenced by the rhetorical refinements of Gorgias, crowded with antitheses, subtle and elaborate. This we must conclude from the Aristophanic imitations and from the rhetorical antithetic manner of the speech which Plato makes him deliver in the *Symposium*.

Agathon

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[1] *Poetics* 9.

[2] *ib.* 18.

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CHAPTER XV

COMEDY: OLD, MIDDLE, AND NEW

COMEDY, like tragedy, is directly connected with the worship of Dionysus. The tragic poets, when they transformed the dithyramb into a drama of human passion, wrote their plays in the service of the most human of all the gods. The poets of comedy looked back, not to the varied and passionate expression of the dithyramb, but to the more hilarious and licentious side of Dionysiac worship, the phallic songs.[1] These were sung in the revel (κῶμος) that followed the vintage festival. The procession with the symbolic phallus was, for the country people, the crowning moment when all restraints were thrown aside, and Dionysus himself, his sorrows forgotten, in his rôle as the god of generation, of all sensual pleasures, presided over their joyous abandonment. When, in the *Acharnians* of Aristophanes, the typical countryman of Attica, Dicaeopolis, has arranged a private and treasonable truce with Sparta, his first thought is that now he can once more keep the country festival of Dionysus. In the forty lines that follow,[2] he directs the small procession before his house, while his wife looks on from the roof. His daughter walks first with the basket of offerings, next, the slave carrying the phallus, while he himself in the rear as chief worshipei addresses Dionysus in language of the broadest and most cheerful indecency. Such a ceremony, with a following crowd of revelers hampered by no conventions, all in the humor for improvised personalities, was the natural birthplace of the comic spirit. The satiric epic *Margites*, the poems of Archilochus

The phallic song

[1] Aristotle, *Poetics* 4.

[2] 237–279.

and Hipponax and all the tribe of iambic satirists, expressed in a literary form and for a more sophisticated audience the satiric and less genial side of such a humor, and from these Comedy, as it became literary, may have borrowed. But its first inspiration was very different from theirs, and it remained the 'Komos-song,' comedy, Dionysiac, and, as such, was at last admitted by the Athenians to the dignity of a state function.

Dorian Comedy

But it was not in Attica that the first steps were taken towards the development of comedy from the phallic song. The invention of comedy was claimed by Dorians. The Dorian colony of Megara in Sicily, as the birthplace of the first great comic poet, Epicharmus, naturally takes precedence of Athens. The pretensions of Nisaean Megara, the mother-city, are more dubious. Aristotle himself could say nothing decisive about "Megarian Comedy,"[1] and when we use the phrase we are probably trying to describe something that never existed as a literary type outside the imagination of later commentators. The allusions in Attic comedy might easily mislead. From the seventh century when Athens and Megara had fought over Salamis, the Athenians had hated their Dorian neighbors, the Megarians. All the references to Megara in Attic comedy are hostile. A 'Megarian joke' is something too coarse and heavy for the Attic ear, Megarian tears are crocodile's tears, Megarian taste is always the worst possible. The Megarian claim that in comedy the Athenians were merely plagiarizing Megara was peculiarly exasperating, because there was probably some truth in it. Some sort of broad farce existed in the Megarid before Athens produced a comic poet. But the comic spirit at Megara was no doubt displayed in buffoonery, *le gros rire*, and no great poet like the colonial Dorian Epicharmus arose to put the Megarian genius for comedy beyond question, and raise Dorian farce above the sneers of Athens. For such a genius we must turn to a colonial settlement, Megara in Sicily.

Megarian farce

Epicharmus was born on Cos, an island colonized by Dorians.

[1] *Poetics* 3.

but the whole of his life was spent in Sicily, and he counts as a Sicilian. From Megara, where he was brought up, he moved to Syracuse, and wrote his comedies under the patronage of Hiero, making one of the group of brilliant men who gave its peculiar distinction to the Syracusan court. There Epicharmus must have met Aeschylus, his junior by fifteen years, whom he outlived, dying at the age of ninety. He had lived long enough to see the downfall of the Sicilian tyrannies and the beginnings of democratic government. But his working life had been passed under the wing of despots, and in an atmosphere that did not encourage political comedy. We have over two hundred fragments of his comedies, and a number of philosophical precepts attributed to him in his character of Pythagorean philosopher. The fragments are invaluable for his dialect, meters, and style. But they give us no clear notion of the genius which made Plato speak of Epicharmus as the master of the comic type, and Horace prefer him to Plautus.[1] Of his skill in drawing character and in devising plots we are in no position to judge. Nor can we pretend to detect in the fragments that animation, that lively *remuage* which, according to Horace, was one of his characteristics beyond the powers of Plautus to imitate. He was the first to bring on the stage the character of the parasite, and we have a fragment of fifteen iambic trimeters[2] in which a parasite describes the seamy side of his servile profession, how, when he has made his jokes and earned his dinner by flattering his host, he must go home alone through the dark and muddy streets, insulted and beaten by the night watchmen, and at last spend the night shivering in his garret. It is from a comedy of another well-known type, the mythological, that we have ten trochaic tetrameters, a monologue by Odysseus, who reflects on the risks that he must run if he should consent to go on a special mission to Troy as a spy.[3] Another fragment of four verses[4] describes the gluttony of Heracles, who appears already as the favorite hero of the comic stage. Sicily

Epicharmus

[1] Plato, *Theaetetus* 152; Horace, *Epistles* 2. 1. 58.

[2] *fr.* 35 (*Kaibel*). [3] *fr.* 99. [4] *fr.* 21.

was the paradise of the epicure, and there are preserved, among the fragments, lists of food that seem always to have amused a Greek audience by their mere length and detail, and were to appear again as a striking feature of the New Comedy. It is curious to find in Epicharmus the earliest example of a stock joke that was worn threadbare, later, on the Athenian stage, and was not disdained by Molière, the pun made through some slight error of pronunciation.[1]

Maxims

Epicharmus is the gnomic comedian, as Euripides is the gnomic poet of tragedy. Certain sententious sayings assigned to him by tradition had a great vogue in Greece, and, if we may trust the fragments that pass under his name, he introduced into his comedies set arguments which, as we have them, out of their setting, seem altogether unsuited to the comic stage. It is curious that the *Seventeenth Epigram* of Theocritus, written for his statue at Syracuse, dwells rather on the value of the maxims of Epicharmus than on his power to amuse.

Dialect

Epicharmus wrote the Doric dialect, and his plays, though they were long read by all educated Greeks, can hardly have been acted, except in Sicily. He used three kinds of meter, — iambic trimeter, trochaic tetrameter, and anapaests.

Meters

There is in the fragments no trace of lyric poetry such as lent a peculiar charm to the comedies of Aristophanes, and if, as seems likely, Epicharmus used a chorus, we know nothing of its rôle.

From the fragments and a number of titles we may conclude that his comedies were of two kinds, — mythological, in which he parodied the heroic legends, as *Hebe's Marriage*, and scenes from ordinary life which foreshadow the plots and intrigues of the New Comedy, such as *The Boastful Man*. He was, in fact, the first to invent stories for his plays, and so is the father of the modern comedy of intrigue. In him we have the bloom of

[1] Cp. Aristoph. *Frogs* 304 with Epicharmus *fr.* 87, and Molière, *Femmes Savantes:* Veux-tu toute la vie offenser la grammaire ? Qui parle d'offenser grandmère ni grandpère ?

Sicilian comedy, and it was short-lived. The Sicilians kept their reputation for wit and ready repartee at least as late as Cicero's time, but they never again achieved a notable success in regular comedy.

Sophron

Sophron of Syracuse, whose date falls in the latter half of the fifth century, wrote mimes which were read and admired throughout Greece, but could hardly have been intended for the regular comic stage. They were character sketches, photographs of the daily life of the middle and lower classes, written, we are told, not in verse, but in a sort of rhythmic prose. We have a few inconsiderable fragments of these, enough to support the tradition that Theocritus imitated Sophron when he wrote his mime of the Syracusan women at the festival of Adonis in Alexandria, commonly known as the *Fifteenth Idyl.* From Sophron's sketch of women uttering incantations, Theocritus may well have drawn his Simaetha of the *Second Idyl,* and it is even suggested that in these lost Sicilian sketches we may see the beginning of Greek pastoral poetry. They may, at any rate, have served as models for a later writer of mimes, Herodas. Sophron's mimes were 'of men' and 'of women,' a reflection of the separate life of the sexes, and were written in colloquial Doric. Plato is said to have admired them, and they were, no doubt, little masterpieces of this minor literary type.

Chionides

Of the beginnings of comedy at Athens, how it was promoted from a village recreation to an important rôle in the Dionysiac festivals of the city, we know little that is definite and cannot expect to be better informed than Aristotle, who admitted his ignorance of its development. At any rate we may safely follow his example and ignore Susarion, to whose name clings the vague tradition that he was the first to introduce comedy from his native Megarid into Attica. The Thespis of Attic comedy seems to have been Chionides, whose plays were performed at Athens about the time of the Second Persian war. It was not until at least half a century after its recognition of tragedy that the state formally admitted comedy to the Dionysiac

competitions.[1] The archon from this time 'grants a chorus' to comedy as well as to tragedy. Comedies were played both at the Lenaea, the winter Dionysia, and at the Great, or City Dionysia in spring, when the audience was increased by the presence of the allies of Athens. Three plays were presented at each festival by three separate poets, except in those rare cases where the same poet offered two plays, thus competing against himself. There was, therefore, no attempt at plays with connected subjects on the analogy of tragedy.

It was at the City Dionysia in 459 that MAGNES, a younger contemporary of Chionides, achieved one of his many successes.

Magnes

We have a few short fragments of his plays, but we should know as little of him as of Chionides had not Aristophanes in the *Knights*[2] reproached the fickle Athenian public with having turned their old favorite Magnes adrift when he had grown gray and they had wearied of his style of music and his choruses of birds, and frogs, and insects.

By this time comedy is fairly established at Athens, with three regular actors, masks, and all the stage machinery borrowed from tragedy. For dialogue the comic writer employed, not only the tragic iambic trimeter and trochaic tetrameter, but also iambic and anapaestic tetrameter and anapaestic dimeter. In its structure a play of the Old Comedy, as we observe it in Aristophanes, is closely akin to tragedy. Prologue, Parodos, and Exodos, with Episodes of arbitrary number and length, are all there. But so also are two features peculiarly its own, the Agon and the Parabasis.

The Agon,[3] or set debate, normally falls between the Parodos,

[1] Capps, in *The Introduction of Comedy into the City Dionysia*, Chicago, 1903, arguing from the evidence of inscriptions, suggests 487 or 486 as the date for this formal recognition of comedy. The question is still open, but the traditional date, which falls about twenty years later, can no longer be taken for granted.

[2] 520 ff.

[3] Westphal's 'syntagma.' The *locus classicus* for the discussion of the Agon is Zieliński, *Die Gliederung der Altattischen Komoedie*, Leipzig, 1885. For the word itself, cp. Aristoph. *Wasps* 533.

or entrance of the chorus, and the Parabasis. But Comedy was always free to reject symmetry of structure, and we see in the *Frogs* that the Agon could follow the Parabasis. In a moral play of the Old Comedy there was always some principle to be maintained, some course to be decided, and the Agon, the debate between two antagonists and the chorus, is the pivot of the play. So in the *Wasps* (526–724) a son must convince his father that a sensible man will not spend his days in the law-courts; in the *Clouds* (889–1104) the Just and Unjust Arguments contend for the education of Athenian youth; in the *Frogs* (895–1078) Aeschylus is pitted against Euripides. Zielinski recognizes nine divisions of the complete Agon. But its economy was by no means regular, its limits are not always obvious, and it could be curtailed or even omitted at the caprice of the poet.

The Agon

The chorus of comedy takes a lively part in the action. But the Parabasis, the interlude in which it faces the spectators and addresses them in the name of the poet, was its most important utterance. In the oldest plays of Aristophanes, in the palmy days of the chorus, we see the Parabasis complete in its seven parts, whose names were probably invented by the scholiasts. First came the anapaestic or trochaic prelude, and the main speech of the coryphaeus in anapaests, ending with the rapid 'choking' verses, spoken in one breath. Then the Epirrhematic Syzygy, or 'set of speeches,' normally composed of a lyric ode with trochaic epirrhema,[1] and a lyric antode with trochaic antepirrhema.[2] The Parabasis could be docked at the poet's pleasure, as we find it in the *Peace* and the *Thesmophoriazousae* of Aristophanes.

The Parabasis

The earliest Attic comedians, like their successors, ridiculed and assailed with the grossest personal abuse any individual who had made himself conspicuous, whether by some eccentricity of

[1] The 'after word' in trochaic tetrameters, so called because it followed the Parabasis. Cp. Aristophanes, *Knights*, 565–580.

[2] The second speech in the trochaic tetrameters, corresponding to the epirrhema. Cp. *Knights*, 594–610.

manners or morals, or as a political leader. Every new movement, every departure from the long-established and conventional, was an opportunity for the comic spirit. In short, the ridicule of the comic stage was a recognized tax on any sort of distinction. In a community as small as Athens, unlimited license of speech must have seemed intolerable as well as dangerous, and in 440 B.C., by the decree of Morychides, and again by the decree of Syracosius in 416 B.C., the Athenians asserted their sense of decency and forbade the comic poets to satirize individuals 'by name.' This was a muzzling order which left to comedy nearly all its old freedom. Moreover, Athens could not for long deprive herself of the fun of seeing the chief citizens held up to ridicule, and, four years later, the decree was revoked.

Meanwhile, Athens had produced a comic poet of whose genius we have a fairly distinct impression, while the other predecessors of Aristophanes are little more than names. CRATINUS, who was an elderly rival of Aristophanes, won his last prize in 423. The dates of his birth and death we can only conjecture. He belonged, like a true comic poet, to the ultra-conservative party, was an admirer of Cimon, the ideal aristocrat (who died in 449), and was bitterly opposed to Pericles as the leader of the triumphant democracy. Of this there is fresh evidence in the recently discovered argument of a play whose plot could not be determined from the nine extant fragments, the *Dionysalexander*[1] (430 or 429 B.C.). This, as we now see, was a mythological comedy, a parody of Trojan legends, which turned on the substitution of Dionysus for Paris (Alexander). It is Dionysus who on Ida, where the scene is laid, awards the prize to Aphrodite. When he has carried off Helen and is hiding with her from the avenging Greeks in the house of the true Paris, the latter resumes his proper place in the story, retains Helen as his wife, and hands over Dionysus to the Greeks. In all this Dionysus is

Cratinus

[1] *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* IV, London, 1904. See Croiset, *Le Dionysalexander de Cratinos* in *Rev. des Études Grecques* 17 (1904), and Körte in *Hermes* 39 (1904).

ridiculed and consoled in turn by a chorus of satyrs. Even into this parody of the saga, Cratinus, as we now learn from the closing words of the argument, introduced an attack upon Pericles as the real author of the Peloponnesian war. Cratinus is, in fact, the first comic poet to introduce political satire, which was to be the main interest of the stage of Aristophanes.

In the *Knights* (424 B.C.), Aristophanes, as he reviewed the short-lived triumphs of his forerunners on the stage, spoke with contemptuous pity of old Cratinus, as a worn-out celebrity too enfeebled by drink to keep up his reputation. 'In his palmy days,' says Aristophanes, 'every one sang his songs, and his wonderful exuberance of speech, a deluge of words, carried all before it. Now he wears a faded garland and is always dying of thirst.' Next year Cratinus repaid Aristophanes for this offensive sympathy by winning from him the first prize with his comedy the *Bottle*, a satire on his own habits. We have over four hundred fragments of Cratinus, chiefly single lines or phrases, or isolated words quoted by grammarians or antiquarian writers, and several titles. The plot of his last play, the *Bottle*, we can reconstruct from the fragments. His mistress, the bottle, has alienated his affections from Comedy, his lawful wife. When Comedy brings suit to recover her rights, Cratinus argues in defense that water drinkers (Horace's *aquae potores*) cannot write good verse. The parabasis seems to have included an attack on Aristophanes. The *Konnos*, a play by Ameipsias that had some reputation, and the *Clouds* of Aristophanes were beaten by the *Bottle*, and the triumph of Cratinus over his younger rival was complete. Cratinus has the credit of improving the technique of comedy, and especially of regulating the number of actors on the analogy of tragedy, though the argument of the *Dionysalexander* shows that for that play he needed four actors.

CRATES, before he wrote comedies, was an actor in the plays of Cratinus. Aristotle, who disliked in comedy direct personal abuse, 'the iambic type,' says that Crates was the first of the Attic comedians to rise above the use of invective and represent the universal.

His first victory was about 449, and he was probably no longer alive when, in 424, in the *Knights* (537), Aristophanes applauded his wit and pitied him for his struggle against the bad taste of the public, who certainly preferred broad farce and personal satire. Crates is said to have been the first to introduce a drunken man on the stage. The most important of his fragments is one of ten trochaic tetrameters in which a speaker describes his ideal home. It is to be free from servants; the food will cook itself and come with the plates and cups, at one's call.[1] We have fifteen titles of the plays of Crates, and about fifty fragments.

Crates

The activity of PHERECRATES, who was called 'the most Attic' of the poets of Old Comedy, extends from 438 to 405 B.C. Plato in the *Protagoras* (327 D) speaks of *The Wild Men* (421 B.C.), the most successful of the plays of Pherecrates, with its chorus of misanthropes who have withdrawn from the *ennui* of civilization, in search of the pleasures of the simple life. This sort of allegorical and moral fiction he seems, like Crates, to have preferred to personal satire. We have over two hundred fragments of Pherecrates, and a number of titles.

Pherecrates

Among the numerous contemporaries and rivals of Aristophanes, three alone have maintained a place in the history of Greek literature, and are something more than names. These are Phrynichus, Plato, and Eupolis. PHRYNICHUS made his *début* in 429. A well-known piece was his character play, the *Misanthrope*, whose hero says of himself: *I live like Timon. I have no wife, no servant, I am irritable and hard to get on with. I never laugh, I never talk, and my opinions are all my own* (*fr.* 18). In 405, when Aristophanes won the first prize with his *Frogs*, Phrynichus was placed second with the *Muses*, itself apparently a literary comedy, a contest between Sophocles and Euripides.

Phrynichus

PLATO was one of the most popular of the poets of the Old Comedy. He had a special gift for writing parodies or burlesques of the myths and legends consecrated by the poets. Such

[1] *fr.* 14 Kock.

were his *Menelaus*, *Europa*, and the *Phaon*, in which he probably parodied the legend of Aphrodite's gift to the Lesbian boatman, a beauty that all women found irresistible. The *Phaon* was played in 391, when political comedy had lost its savor for the Athenians. But in the earlier part of his career, during the latter half of the Peloponnesian war, Plato had written a number of political comedies, such as the *Hyperbolus* (420 B.C.), in which he attacked the demagogue who had succeeded Cleon, and the *Cleophon* (third prize 405 B.C.), a satire on the democratic leader Cleophon who, not long before, had made a name by his financial reforms and was one of the chief opponents of peace with Sparta. Like all the distinguished poets of Attic comedy, Plato wrote satiric studies of contemporary society, such as the play called *The Women coming Home from Sacrifice*. We have fragments enough to prove that, though not one of the giants of Attic comedy, he was an accomplished and witty writer.

Plato

Eupolis was the most brilliant of those who competed with Aristophanes, and the disappearance of his plays is a misfortune only second to the loss of Menander. He was a precocious poet, still in his teens, when, in 429, two years before the *début* of Aristophanes, he brought out his first play. But his career as a comic writer was cut short by his early death about 415. In 421, when the *Peace* of Aristophanes won the second prize, Eupolis was placed first with his *Parasites*, a satire on the extravagance of Callias son of Hipponicus, the rich young Athenian who entertains Protagoras in Plato's dialogue, and became a proverb at Athens for his extravagance and his taste for sophists. In a fragment of sixteen verses from this play, a parasite describes the bait set for such a one as Callias by men whose first duty it is to flatter, their second to be witty or lose their dinner.[1] In another play, Eupolis, with easy irreverence, brought on the stage Dionysus the effeminate and timid god as a raw recruit undergoing military drill. The *Maricas* (420), which made his reputation as an unsparing satirist, was a political comedy directed

Eupolis

[1] *fr.* 159.

against the demagogue Hyperbolus and his mother, who was represented as a shameless old woman dancing the indecent cordax and speaking Greek with a Thracian accent. In the *Baptists* (415) Eupolis attacked Alcibiades, whose influence he regarded as a sign of the decadence of Athenian politics. Hence arose the legend that his death, which followed shortly afterwards, was caused by Alcibiades. Pericles had seemed to Cratinus a dangerous demagogue. To Eupolis, who, when the great statesman died, was only seventeen, Pericles stood for an older tradition, made orthodox in the sight of a Greek comic poet by the mere lapse of time. So it happens that the most expressive and most quoted of his fragments is the praise of the oratory of Pericles.[1] Eupolis and Aristophanes had much in common. Both were genuine patriots of the conservative, anti-democratic type, both disliked the sophists and the new movement in education, and agreed in regarding Socrates as one of the most noxious of the sophist class. *I can't endure Socrates*, says Eupolis, *he is always talking, always penniless, always thinking over questions of all sorts except the really vital question where his dinner is to come from.*[2] Just so, more than a generation later, two poets of the Middle Comedy, Alexis and Anaxandrides, ridiculed the frugality and austerity of the philosopher Plato, the pupil of the 'unwashed Socrates.'

In the composition of the *Knights* (424) Aristophanes was assisted by Eupolis and won the first prize, though he was competing against Cratinus. Two years later, the youthful collaborators had quarrelled and accused each other of plagiarism, Eupolis declaring that he had made a present of the play to Aristophanes, 'my bald friend,'[3] while Aristophanes complained that Eupolis had stolen the idea of his *Maricas* from the *Knights*.[4] In this famous literary quarrel Cratinus took part, smarting as he was under the insolent pity of Aristophanes in the *Knights*. In his play, the *Bottle*, he sided with Eupolis, and taunted Aristophanes with his

[1] *fr.* 94. Nauck, *Mélanges Gréco-Romains* V 219, has collected a number of passages in which these verses are praised.

[2] *fr.* 352. [3] *fr.* 78. [4] *Clouds* 553.

debt to his collaborator. We have no evidence as to the rights of the case, and can hardly trust the scholiast on the *Knights* who says that the second parabasis of that play was written by Eupolis. Eupolis won seven first prizes in his brief career. Numerous fragments and the titles of fifteen plays have survived.

ARISTOPHANES of the deme Cydathene was born about 445 B.C. His parentage seems to have been at least respectable, but of his private life, apart from his theatrical career, we in fact know nothing. The tradition that his parents owned property in Aegina depends on a passage in a play which was given under the name of Callistratus, the *Acharnians*,[1] and need not have referred to Aristophanes himself. Like Eupolis, he was not out of his teens when his first comedy was produced at Athens. This was the *Banqueters* (427 B.C.). But he did not yet venture to demand a chorus in his own name, and it was not till three years later that he made his real *début* by assuming the full responsibility for the *Knights* (424). His last play was the second edition of the *Plutus*, brought out in 388. In the forty years of his theatrical career he wrote forty comedies. Of these, eleven survive, isolated in Greek literature as the only specimens of Greek comedy that have come down to us complete.

Aristophanes

The *Banqueters*, lost save for a few fragments, was brought out under the name of a friend, the actor Philonides, and won the second prize at the Lenaea in 427. Aristophanes was a mere boy when he wrote this satire on the New Education. The central interest was apparently furnished by two youths who embody the effects of two methods of education. One has been trained, like his father, in the good old-fashioned way, the other, fresh from the debates of the sophists, is a fastidious, over-educated pedant, an expert in the peculiar or obsolete diction of the rhetoricians, but unable to sing a drinking song of Alcaeus or Anacreon.[2] The same theme was to be worked out four years later in the *Clouds*, where Aristophanes refers to his first play[3] in a passage that is the only safe clew to its plot.

The Banqueters

[1] 652. [2] *fr.* 223. [3] 527–529.

The *Babylonians* was produced at the Great Dionysia in 426 under the name of Callistratus, another actor. This was a violent attack on the home and foreign policy of Athens. Though it was to Callistratus that the archon granted the chorus, there was probably no secret as to the real authorship. The bitterest satire of the piece had been directed against Cleon the demagogue, and he retorted by indicting Callistratus on the charge that, at the Great Dionysia, in the presence of the allies, he had made Athens ridiculous. That neither Aristophanes nor Callistratus suffered seriously from this indictment is certain.

The Babylonians

At the Lenaea of 425, Callistratus again stood sponsor for the *Acharnians*, the oldest comedy still extant. The play won the first prize, Cratinus being placed second, Eupolis third. At the Lenaea no strangers were present:

The Acharnians

> *Cleon at least cannot accuse me now,*
> *That I defame the city before strangers.*
> *For this is the Lenaean festival,*
> *And here we meet all by ourselves, alone.*[1]

In those days only one subject came home to all Athens, the war with Sparta. For six years Attica had endured an annual invasion, while the country people must live in the overcrowded city. Aristophanes took for his hero one of these countrymen, Dicaeopolis (Honest Policy), who sighs for peace and the comforts of country life. The first scene is a session of the Assembly on the Pnyx, a satire on the blind obstinacy of the authorities in rejecting all overtures for peace, and an exhibition of the ease with which the people are gulled by envoys from Persia and Thrace. Dicaeopolis, in disgust, makes a private and personal treaty of peace with Sparta. The scene changes to a street before the houses of Dicaeopolis, Euripides, and Lamachus, the Athenian general, one of the war party. Dicaeopolis is interrupted in his feast of Dionysus by the furious entry of the chorus, old men of the deme Acharnae, chiefly charcoal burners who are less affected than the farmers by the miseries of war, and are eager to stone

[1] *Acharnians* 502 ff., Frere's translation.

this traitor who has made terms with Sparta. Dicaeopolis meets their onslaught with a sensational effect travestied from Euripides. Seizing a charcoal basket, he threatens it with immediate destruction, a reminiscence of the *Telephus* and the *Orestes*. To save this precious object, the fierce Acharnians are driven to a compromise; Dicaeopolis must make his defense of his treasonable truce. To excite pity one should be in rags; so much Euripides had taught with his ragged heroes. Dicaeopolis hails the poet, who is writing tragedies in his garret, and after a long parley, full of insults and ridicule of Euripides, borrows the outfit of the most ragged hero of all, Telephus, the beggar king. Armed with the tragic style and semblance, he pleads the cause of peace in a seriocomic speech, till the chorus, half persuaded, calls in Lamachus to support its side. Dicaeopolis talks them all down, and is left in possession of his treaty. In this play, for the first time, Aristophanes used a parabasis. Here it is a defense of his motives in writing the *Babylonians*, an appeal to the humor and sense of the Athenians, a defiance of Cleon and his counter attacks. The last part of the play is the broadest comedy, a series of episodes to illustrate the advantages of peace to Dicaeopolis, his monopoly of good things, his triumph over the malice of sycophants, the envy of his neighbors. A starving Megarian, long excluded from the markets of Athens, offers for sale his children disguised as pigs; a Theban brings eels and other Boeotian dainties; and while Lamachus must answer a summons to war, and set out in the snow, Dicaeopolis retires to drink and feast with flute girls. In the last episode the contrast is still more acute. The general is brought in wounded, and the man of peace carries off the honors in a scene of drunken revelry which bears all the marks of the Dionysiac origin of comedy and its direct inheritance of the grossness of the phallic songs. It is to be noted that, though in his later plays Aristophanes was to make his personal attacks with the thinnest of disguises, the *Acharnians* is the only comedy in which he brings politicians on the stage under their own names, — Amphitheus, who makes the treaty, and Lamachus.

In the *Acharnians*, Aristophanes, with a side thrust at his enemy's trade of tanning, promised that he would cut up Cleon into shoe leather for the knights, the respectable middle class of Athens. Accordingly, at the next Lenaea (424 B.C.), six months after Cleon's sensational *coup* at Sphacteria, he produced in his own name the *Knights*, of all his plays the most purely political in interest. It was his first unchaperoned play, and with it he again won the first prize over Cratinus. This was his proudest victory, the most difficult and daring of his political comedies. In the *Acharnians* he had appealed to the common sense of Athens to judge between himself and Cleon. But now he turned the full force of his satire against the sovereign people itself, and though he kept his promise and tore Cleon to shreds, his audience fared no better. Demos, the allegorical figure in whom is centered the interest of the play, is a foolish old gentleman, superstitious, credulous, easily flattered; at home he is the most reasonable of men, but once he has entered the Assembly he sits with his mouth open like any fool (752). When the play begins, Demos is under the thumb of a wily slave, a Paphlagonian. This is the demagogue Cleon, wearing indeed no mask in Cleon's likeness, since the mask makers, as the poet explains, lacked the courage for that: *But no one will fail to know whom I mean. My audience is sharp enough* (230 ff.). Two other slaves of Demos, apparently the generals Demosthenes and Nicias, conspire to oust Cleon. They find an oracle which foretells that the Paphlagonian will be overthrown by a sausage seller. Enter accordingly a citizen unconscious of his destiny, selling sausages. Under this disguise Aristophanes satirizes Hyperbolus, a demagogue of the lowest origin, the favorite butt of political comedy, and Cleon's actual successor. He is persuaded to outbid the Paphlagonian for the favor of Demos. In the scenes that follow, Aristophanes makes fun of the Senate and the Assembly, and spares no pains to show up the weaknesses of the fickle and credulous mob that governed Athens. The Paphlagonian is routed, but the sausage seller's success is not a success of merit.

The Knights

He is merely more cunning, more apt to cringe and flatter his master. The *Knights* has two parabases. In the first (498–610), Aristophanes reviews the work and fortunes of his predecessors in comedy. Here was the passage which Cratinus resented and avenged a year later, in the *Bottle*. The second parabasis (1263–1315) is said to have been written by Eupolis. It is partly a series of indecent lampoons on well-known Athenians, partly an imaginary debate of the fleet, which is indignant at the idea of sailing under Hyperbolus, the *parvenu* politician who had risen from selling lamps. In the end, Demos is rejuvenated and recovers the common sense and dignity that were his in the good old days of Miltiades and Aristeides. This was a touch of flattery that left the audience in a good humor.

The Clouds

At the City Dionysia in 423 Aristophanes produced his first version of the *Clouds* and was beaten by Cratinus and Ameipsias. He was deeply mortified by this rebuff, as he told his audience in the *Wasps* (1044) and in the revised version of the *Clouds* (518 ff.), which, though it never appeared on the stage, has survived the earlier edition. In rewriting the play after its failure, Aristophanes gave it a new parabasis (518 ff.), and added the debate of the Just and Unjust Arguments, the Agon (889 ff.), and the closing incident of the burning of the house of Socrates. But in its main outlines the play was probably little changed. It is an attack on the New Education and its professors, a subject which Aristophanes had treated tentatively in the *Banqueters*. To make such a satire effective he must display in a single personage all the varied aspects and interests, all the weaknesses and dangers of the new, fashionable sophistic and its art of rhetoric. He chose for the scapegoat of the sophists, not a foreigner, an occasional visitor, like Protagoras or Gorgias, but a figure familiar to every Athenian, one of themselves — Socrates.

> "Socrates? No, but that pernicious seed
> Of sophists whereby hopeful youth is taught
> To jabber argument, chop logic, pore
> On sun and moon, and worship Whirligig."[1]

[1] Browning, *Aristophanes' Apology*.

The fact that Socrates was a philosopher, who himself disliked and opposed the sophistic method and professions, mattered nothing to Aristophanes or his audience, and did not weaken the force of the satire. For the crowd, Socrates, with his persistent dialectic, his refusal to take traditions for granted, his annoying missionary air, was a sophist like the rest. To Aristophanes, the implacable reactionary with his eyes fixed on the perfections of the past, this untiring debater who wished to replace conventional morality by a new and more rational system of ethics seemed the most formidable, the most disturbing, among the teachers of the younger generation. Nor was a comic poet likely to spare one so conspicuous, so eccentric, so fitted by nature for the comic mask. The result was a caricature amusing enough. In the character of the Aristophanic Socrates there is no unity, but the unity of the play is secured by the admirable figure of Strepsiades the *bourgeois*, from whom Molière borrowed certain features for his *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*. Strepsiades, who has married above his rank, is driven by the extravagance of his aristocratic son Pheidippides to devise some method of evading his creditors. It occurs to him that the sophists, who can make the worse appear the better cause, are just the men to help him. His son refuses to forsake the turf and grow pale like a middle-class sophist, so Strepsiades himself proceeds to the school of Socrates, who hangs in a basket observing the sun, while his pupils, in ridiculous postures, study geometry and geography and apply their wits to minute research work. One of them boasts that their master had secured them a supper by a neat theft in the palaestra. So, too, Eupolis (*fr.* 361) had described how Socrates stole a goblet at a musical party. All Athens knew that Socrates was incapable of sneak-thieving, perfectly indifferent to luxuries, and there lay the joke. For Socrates there was no sting in such a jest. What he felt keenly was the complete misconception of his aim and of the nature of his studies, that he whose single interest was ethics should have been brought on the stage blaspheming the gods and talking nonsense about astronomy and physics, studies to which he was indifferent, if not

hostile. Plato in his *Apology* makes Socrates say that of all his accusers he feared most this comedian who in his *Clouds*, twenty years earlier, had so misrepresented him. The lessons of Socrates prove too subtle for the wits of Strepsiades, and he persuades his son to take his place. *You'll be sorry for this, later on*, says Pheidippides, as, with a bad grace, he leaves his horse-racing to learn the dialectic of the sophists. This is the key-note of what follows. Young and eager for novelties, typical of the degenerate youth of Athens, he soon acquires the sophistic method and is ready to rout his creditors. But his father's admiration is changed to hatred of the sophists when he finds that they have relieved his son of every scruple, including filial piety. He has lost his taste for Simonides and Aeschylus, and will sing only passages from the immoral Euripides. Aristophanes usually ends his comedies with some sort of procession or scene of revelry, as in the *Acharnians*, *Wasps*, and *Peace*, but the *Clouds*, as we have it, closes with a real *dénouement*. Strepsiades, eager to burn what he has worshiped, sets fire to the school of Socrates.

The chorus of cloud goddesses who come down Mount Parnes, *through the hollows and the thickets, aslant, in trailing multitudes*, are introduced as the deities worshiped by Socrates and his school. Their lyrics gave Aristophanes a chance for snatches of poetry, such as, here and there, in his plays, lent the charm of sudden contrast. The agon of the Just and Unjust Arguments which represent the old and new morality and dispute with each other the right to educate Pheidippides, is closely analogous to the celebrated allegory of Prodicus the sophist, in which Pleasure and Virtue contend for the soul of Heracles. The parabasis was written after 420, since Aristophanes accuses Eupolis (553 ff.) of having plagiarized his *Knights* in the *Maricas*, which appeared in that year. The prologue, like that of the *Acharnians*, is the Euripidean type in which the leading character describes the situation in a soliloquy.[1]

The *Wasps*, which won the first prize in 422, is a political

[1] Cp. the prologues of the *Mad Heracles* and the *Andromache*.

and social satire. In the *Clouds* Aristophanes had offered the Athenians less indecency, less of the phallic element, than so far in any of his comedies. The play had failed, and he now, with some chagrin, gave his audience no philosophic play, but *a plain little plot with a moral* (64), ending with a scene of unbridled dissipation such as was sure to leave the spectators in a good humor. The *Wasps* is a satire on the Athenian mania for the law courts. These had become a democratic institution since Cleon, in 425–424, raised the juryman's fee from one to three obols (about ten cents) a day. The poorest Athenian could now afford to spend his time sitting on a jury, and felt himself at last the political equal of the most aristocratic citizen. It was a situation naturally hateful to Aristophanes and the conservatives. Cleon is, as usual, held responsible for all the defects of Athenian politics. If the politician and poet had ever agreed on a truce, as is hinted, though obscurely, in the second parabasis of the *Wasps* (1284 ff.), it was now at an end. The foolish old juryman who plays the leading rôle is called Philocleon (Cleon's Friend), while his level-headed son who is the mouthpiece of Aristophanes is Bdelycleon (Cleon Hater). Aristophanes set out to ridicule Cleon's popular juries and to show the baleful effect of those three obols, whose influence became proverbial. But the interest is soon diverted from the general question to a study of the character of Philocleon, the typical Athenian with a passion for the law courts. The prologue is Euripidean, a dialogue of two slaves, of whom one expounds the situation to the audience. They are helping their young master to keep his father at home. To this end they must net the house, since the infatuated dicast tries to escape through the chimney, by the rain gutter, and, like Odysseus escaping from the Cyclops, conceals himself under an ass that is being driven to market. This scene is one of the rare parodies of epic in Aristophanes. The chorus of elderly jurymen, armed with stings to show their aggressive temper, come to Philocleon's rescue and are repulsed by his son. They consent to argue the case, and the set debate, the agon, follows. The chorus is easily

The Wasps

converted by Bdelycleon's arguments, and Philocleon, who must sit on a jury or die of boredom, accepts a compromise. He will stay at home and hold a private court. The scene that follows, with the trial of the dog Labes, was closely imitated by Racine in *Les Plaideurs*, a comedy which throughout is often merely a translation of the *Wasps*. Racine, however, dwelt rather on the mania of an individual for going to law, while for Aristophanes the juryman's disease was typically Athenian. After the agon, the play turns from satire to farce. Philocleon is so ardent a convert that, like the Late Learner in the *Characters* of Theophrastus, he decides to become a young man about town, and is coached by his son in the latest musical etiquette, table manners, and dress. He has merely exchanged one vice for another. The reformed juryman is now the scandal of the town, and the play ends with a drunken brawl, the phallic obscenity demanded by the Athenians. The hero is left dancing the cordax, the climax of Greek drunkenness. So much for the promised moral of the play. It has two parabases.

The Peace

The *Peace*, performed in 421, renews the theme of the *Acharnians* in that it is a manifesto against the war. But times were changed. Both sides had now grown weary of a struggle that had lasted for a decade, and the Peace of Nicias, fixed for a term of fifty years, was on the eve of ratification. Aristophanes is less violent than when in opposition, and the *Peace* has far less spirit and action than the *Acharnians*. This time he took for his hero Trugaeus (Vine-harvester), a typical vine-growing peasant of Attica. Wearied, like Dicaeopolis, by the long delays of the politicians, he sets out on a special mission to the skies to persuade Zeus to act as mediator. He makes the ascent on a gigantic beetle from Etna, bestriding it like Bellerophon on Pegasus, a parody of Euripides. He finds that the gods, disgusted with the belligerence of the Greeks, have retired, leaving War in possession. Peace has been shut up, like Antigone, in a cave, and Trugaeus calls on the working classes of all Greece to combine to set her free. The chorus of Greek artisans arrives in the skies

without visible means of ascent, a marvel that remains unexplained. Starving Megarians, lazy Boeotians, strenuous Spartans, malcontent Argives, all take part, and Peace at last emerges from her dungeon attended by Opora, goddess of autumn fruits, and Theoria, who personifies those embassies to the Greek shrines which were possible only in peace. Trugaeus descends, hands over Theoria to the care of the Senate, and celebrates his nuptials with Opora. After his return to earth, the action drags. The last five hundred lines are taken up with scenes to illustrate the effects of the new peace on the trade of Athens. The play contains classic passages in praise of peace enjoyed under one's own vine and fig tree, of that happy state in which, as Bacchylides sang in his paean on Peace, the weapons of war are hidden by spiders' webs. The parabasis is almost wholly an assertion of the poet's superiority to his rivals, on the ground that he avoids gross and trivial pleasantries and presents the audience with new and original jests of a finer make. The *Peace* lacks the agonistic element which was so well suited to the talent of Aristophanes, and inevitably acquires some of the tediousness of an allegory. It was beaten by the *Parasites* of Eupolis. The records of the theater seem to have referred to two editions of the *Peace*, but we cannot tell which has survived, or whether only one version appeared on the Athenian stage.

The Birds

The *Birds* was brought out in 414 at the City Dionysia, and was beaten by a comedy of Ameipsias. Two Athenians, Peisthetairus (Plausible) and Euelpides (Hopeful), wearied of the chicanery of Athens, set out to seek some 'easier, unlitigious place.' Peisthetairus, the master spirit, is, however, by no means one of those who long for wings that they may fly away and be at peace. He is the born political adventurer, the empire builder, never so happy as when he is working up some new scheme of government. Euelpides is the typical hanger-on, the buffoon to whose frequent and foolish comments his leader pays no attention. Guided by birds, they reach a wild and hilly country, the home of the hoopoe, that mysterious bird of Oriental and Greek legends, still to be found on Mount Taygetus, and still

held sacred by the Arabs, the unclean lapwing of *Leviticus* and *Deuteronomy*. The hoopoe was once Tereus, the cruel king of Daulis, and is gifted with miraculous intelligence. Peisthetairus claims him as an ally and confides his project of founding the empire of the birds, midway between earth and heaven, an excellent vantage-place from which to dictate terms to gods and men. The hoopoe calls to their councils the chorus of birds, who enter one by one, dressed in appropriate plumage, the most effective and expensive chorus of Aristophanic comedy. Hostile, at first, and distrustful of mankind, they are won by the rhetoric of the adventurer, and accept his programme for the founding of Cloudcuckooland. Since it is indispensable that the two Athenians should be completely naturalized, they eat a magic root provided by the hoopoe, the maidenhair fern of the hoopoe legend, and are transformed to birds. The parabasis is one of the boldest flights of serious poetry in Aristophanes, and shows that a true poet can make even Theogonies effective: —

It was Chaos and Night at the first, and the blackness of darkness, and Hell's broad border,
Earth was not, nor air, neither heaven; when in depths of the womb of the dark without order
First thing first-born of the black-plumed Night was a wind-egg hatched in her bosom,
Whence timely with seasons revolving again sweet Love burst out as a blossom,
Gold wings glittering forth of his back, like whirlwinds gustily turning. . . .[1]

During the foundation ceremonies of the new city and the sacrifice to the bird deities who are to be its guardians, a crowd of settlers and adventurers begins to pour in; a dithyrambic poet looking for soaring strophes in the upper air; a soothsayer; Meton, the astronomer, who is told to measure his way back and so put his geometry to a practical use (for Aristophanes has a truly conservative horror of science); a petty official eager to import red tape from Athens. All are turned back by Peisthetairus, who has no mind to make his ideal city a mere replica of Athens. Mean-

[1] From Swinburne's translation.

while the actual walls with their monstrous fortifications have been built by the birds. Its fame reaches Athens, and thereupon the Spartan mode goes out of fashion, and all become ornithomaniacs, and ape the habits and dress of Cloudcuckooland. An Athenian herald is sent with congratulations on the great enterprise. And now from above, Prometheus, the friend of man, always glad to outwit the gods, comes to report that the new city intercepts the savory smoke of sacrifice; the gods are starving, and the birds may expect a divine embassy. Accordingly, Heracles the glutton, Poseidon his uncle, and a stammering god from Thrace arrive to make terms. Peisthetairus plays on the greed of Heracles and secures his own conditions. Like other adventurers, he wishes to found a royal house, and receives from the gods Basileia (Royalty), daughter of Zeus. The play ends with his wedding festivities.

The intention of Aristophanes in writing the *Birds* is one of the unsolved problems of Greek literature. If it was pure fantasy, like the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, it holds an isolated position among the plays of Aristophanes. If it is the picture of a Utopia, designed to show up the weaknesses of Athens, it was likely to miss its aim, since Peisthetairus can hardly have been the poet's notion of an ideal ruler. It was more in the manner of Aristophanes that the play should have a direct reference to the state of Athenian affairs. Nearly a year had passed since the sailing of the Sicilian expedition, and the dilatory policy of Nicias was already threatening its success. When the comic spirit undertakes to teach as well as amuse, it is seldom consistent or coherent, and it is possible that the *Birds* was written as an anti-imperialistic manifesto. If so, it is inevitable to see in Peisthetairus the portrait of Alcibiades, that restless and ardent imperialist who had incited the Athenians to the conquest of Sicily.

The *Lysistrata*, produced at the Lenaea of 411, is the first of three extant comedies in which Aristophanes gave the leading rôle to women. Their share in his other plays had been both unseemly and insignificant. Like the *Acharnians* and the *Peace*, the *Lysistrata* is a manifesto against the war, which, renewed only three years

after the peace of Nicias, was now in its most disastrous stage after the collapse of the Sicilian expedition. To that misfortune, as fatal to Athens as Napoleon's Russian campaign to French ambition, Aristophanes only once refers (590,) and turns hastily from it, as though neither he nor his audience could endure the reminder. Athens was now on the eve of the oligarchic revolution which was to place the Four Hundred in power for three months, and to demonstrate, even to the aristocratic poet, the superior merits of democracy. But in this play his mind is wholly set on the desirability of peace. In his earlier plays he had shown the point of view of the men of the middle and working classes. Here we have the women's side, their peculiar grievances against the war party. His heroine, whose name means 'Disbander of Armies,' is a strong-minded woman with a gift for rhetoric, one who, in the respectable society of Athens, had no opportunity for displaying her talents outside the home. She persuades the matrons of Athens and the athletic women delegates from Sparta who attend her conference to desert their homes and husbands and to refuse to return until peace shall have been proclaimed. The episodes that follow the strike of the wives were designed partly to amuse the audience with their astonishing license, partly to give an opening for the common-sense argument of the wise and witty Lysistrata, who utters the sentiments of the poet as well as her own. She is clever enough to make even women work together for a single end, and the play closes with peace festivities and choral songs in the Doric and Attic dialects. The *Lysistrata* is the last and least bitter of the political plays of Aristophanes. It has no parabasis, but a divided chorus of men and women who take a lively part in the action.

The Lysistrata

The *Thesmophoriazousae* (*Women at the Feast of Demeter*), performed at the spring Dionysia in the same year (411), is a literary satire. Since the scene in the *Acharnians*, several years before, when Euripides, swinging absurdly in a stage machine, had wailed aloud that, in borrowing the beggar's outfit of Telephus,

Dicaeopolis had robbed him of all his tragic effects, Aristophanes had never failed to fling a taunt at a poet who stood for the decadence of tragic art, as well as the corruption of Athenian manners and standards. One of the stock effects of comedy was the sudden change from colloquial Greek to the tragic style, and it was nearly always the style and ideas of Euripides that Aristophanes chose for this travesty.[1] In his lost *Proagon* (*Rehearsal*), played in 422, Euripides had been the central figure in a parody of a rehearsal of one of his own plays. And now Aristophanes made another direct attack on the tragic poet, who was an old man by this time, near the close of his career. Here we have a regular plot, more carefully sustained and worked out than is the case in the other extant comedies. On the third day of the feast of Demeter (Thesmophoria), Euripides learns that the women have agreed to vary their festival by a debate as to the best method of revenge on one who, in his tragedies, had exposed the vices of their sex. He entreats Agathon, the tragic poet, who is effeminate enough to pass muster as a woman, to go and plead for him at the festival, from which men are rigidly excluded. The scene with Agathon is a satire on the new poetry, all rhythm and metaphors and fine senseless phrases, and on Agathon himself, the womanish poet, who receives on the whole more severe handling than Euripides. Where Agathon refuses to tread, a kinsman of the wife of Euripides, regularly identified by the scholiasts with Mnesilochus, Euripides' father-in-law, is eager to rush in. Disguised in women's clothes from the wardrobe of the dissolute Agathon, he slips in among the assembled women. There, with more courage than tact, he pleads that Euripides left a good deal unsaid, and for that women ought to be grateful. His infuriated hearers soon discover the sex of this unsympathetic intruder, and hand him over to a Scythian guard. The chief interest of what follows is the travesty of passages from the *Helen* and the *Andromeda* of Euripides, parodies

The Thesmophoriazousae

[1] Cp. *Clouds* 26; *Peace* 64; *Wasps* 111; *Knights* 30. Bakhuyzen finds 149 parodies of Euripides in the extant plays and fragments of Aristophanes.

of meter and style which we are to believe did not bore the audience. To rescue his father-in-law, Euripides appears as Menelaus delivering Helen from Egypt, and as Perseus, the savior of Andromeda, Mnesilochus in each case assuming the appropriate part. These literary subtleties are lost on the Scythian. Meanwhile Euripides makes up his own quarrel with the women by a compromise, and finally diverts the attention of the Scythian by the charms of a dancer, so that Mnesilochus escapes. Consistency in satire is the last thing attempted by Aristophanes. He had set out to write a satire on decadent tragedy, but the chance presented by the feminine debate was too good to let slip. On the comic stage women, to be amusing, must be coarse and depraved, always drinking, as they had been shown in the *Lysistrata*, experts in the art of outwitting husbands. This is the strongest impression of the present play. In the parabasis, which is their apologia, the women hardly improve their case with the retort, *Then why do you marry us? Why are you so eager to keep us?* (788 ff.). The play contains scenes heroically shocking. But perhaps the extracts from Euripides, about 200 verses, wearied even the Athenian taste for parody. At any rate Aristophanes did not win the first prize. He wrote a second play with the same title and a fresh plot if we may judge from the numerous fragments. The play is singular in that it ends, not with a procession, but with real action, the distracted evolutions of the Scythian when he finds that his captive has escaped.

The Frogs

The *Frogs* won the first prize at the Lenaea of 405. In the autumn of 406 Athens had won the great naval battle of Arginusae, a victory whose triumph was dashed by the disgrace and death of six Athenian generals. In the same year Euripides died in Macedonia, and soon after came the death of the aged Sophocles. Here was an opening for a literary comedy on the relations that might be supposed to exist between the three great tragedians who had now met in the underworld, and for a picture of the forlorn state of tragedy, which, at the coming Dionysia, must fall back on the sons and nephews of the

incomparable dead. Dionysus, the god of the theater, in despair at the prospects of the theatrical season, decides to make one of those descents into the underworld that were so familiar to the Greeks from their saga stories. As Orpheus fluted Eurydice from the dead, as Theseus and Peirithous went down to carry off Persephone, as Heracles dragged Cerberus to the light, so this effeminate god, little fitted for the heroic rôle, disguises himself with the lion skin and club of Heracles, and with Xanthias, his grumbling slave, sets out to bring back Euripides, the delight of the Athenian stage. The play is named from the secondary chorus of frogs, which sings a lyric accompaniment with a croaking refrain while Dionysus is being rowed by Charon across the Acherontian marshes. The main chorus consists of the spirits of the initiated, the mystics of the Eleusinian mysteries. Their beautiful choral songs invoking Persephone, Demeter, and Iacchus are fit for the most sacred ceremonies of Eleusis. They are a sort of saving clause of piety, a sudden relief from the grotesque picture of the weakness and cowardice of Dionysus. After an Odyssey of adventures, all designed to amuse the audience at the expense of the god of the festival, the two explorers reach the door of Pluto, and we have another episode of divinity in distress. The play is more than half done, when, after the parabasis, which here precedes the agon, the literary satire begins. Dionysus finds himself called on to umpire the quarrel of Aeschylus and Euripides, who both claim the tragic throne in Hades. Euripides has the mob on his side, for the good are scarce in Hades, as at Athens. Sophocles, "the good easy soul," would rather not contend, but is ready, should Euripides win, to enter the lists on his own account. Aristophanes sometimes parodied the tragedies of Sophocles,[1] and though, as a rule, he is indulgent to him, like all the comic poets, there is an unkind reference in the *Peace* (699) to the avarice of a poet who 'would put to sea in a sieve for money.' But Sophocles represents the golden mean, and a satire like the present

[1] Bakhuyzen finds 23 parodies of Sophocles in Aristophanes' plays and fragments.

could only be effective if it dealt with the extremes of the tragic manner. Through the debate that follows Aristophanes is plainly on the side of Aeschylus, who stood for the spirit and the triumphs of the *tempus actum*, but just as one may ridicule one's gods, since it is certain that the august ones enjoy a joke,[1] so one's most revered poet comes in for his share of parody,[2] only in this case the parody is without malice. First, each antagonist makes his claim, Euripides that he has reduced the inflated bulk of Aeschylean tragedy and made her democratic and useful, to which Aeschylus retorts that, for his part, he has taught the Athenians to be warlike, while, by degrading the heroic type, Euripides has made them sentimental and immoral. Moreover, Euripides has an unfair advantage: *My poetry did not die with me. His did, so that he will have it here to quote.*[3] Then they come to closer quarters and compare their prologues. Aeschylus proves, to the chagrin of Euripides, that in the latter's stereotyped prologue, with its monotonous construction, one can regularly replace three and a half feet of the second or third line by a meaningless phrase, 'he lost his little oil-flask.'[4] Each criticises the other's choral lyrics, and Aeschylus attacks the innovations of Euripides, his metrical irregularities, his favorite 'shake,'[5] and especially the Cretan monodies with their mixed meters and lack of meaning. At last scales are brought that Dionysus may weigh their verses 'like a pound of cheese.' The weighty epithets of Aeschylus naturally turn the scale in his favor, but still Dionysus hesitates: *The one is so clever and the other is my delight.* He will give Euripides another chance. *He that shall best advise the city, he shall come with me.* The political epigrams of Euripides prove to be merely clever, and Dionysus decides to choose Aeschylus. *O remember the gods by whom you swore you'd take me!* cries Euripides. *It was only my tongue that swore,* retorts Dionysus, cruelly echoing the famous

[1] Plato, *Cratylus* 406 c.
[2] Bakhuyzen finds 37 parodies of Aeschylus in Aristophanes.
[3] 868 f. [4] 1203 ff.
[5] Cp. 1314, where a single syllable is spread out over several beats.

repartee from the *Hippolytus*, which was constantly quoted against Euripides by Greek writers and even, says Aristotle, in the law courts of Athens. The chorus applauds the exit of Dionysus and his poet. The parabasis is of the personal and political type with the familiar warnings against demagogues, especially Cleophon, who was now prominent.

The *Ecclesiazousae* (*Women in Parliament*) was produced in 392. Its heroine Praxagora, a bolder and more inventive Lysistrata, is the ringleader in a conspiracy of strong-minded Athenian women, whose cry is not "equal rights," but the subjection of men. Disguised in the clothes of their husbands, this pale-faced crowd, looking like a lot of shoemakers, says an amazed *habitué* of the Pnyx, carries a resolution to hand over the government to the women of Athens. Aristophanes gives us the rehearsal for this assembly, but not the scene of the meeting at which Praxagora urged that women have more common sense than men, more skill in finance, are more scrupulous, more conservative. What is more, this scheme is the only novelty that has not been tried by the changeable Athenians. Equality and Fraternity is Praxagora's party cry, and her constitution is communism undiluted. All forms of wealth are to be owned by the state and distributed in equal allowances. There will be no debts, no lawsuits, no thieves, and the law courts are transformed into public dining-rooms where every citizen is to dine at the public expense. Wives and children are to be common to all. The last 400 lines of the play partly illustrate the futility of the communistic ideal, which assumes that no man will want more than his share, and are partly a series of grotesque and obscene incidents resulting from Praxagora's law that in love affairs the old are to be given precedence of the young. There is no real *dénouement*, and the piece ends with the breathless song of the chorus of women hastening to the public dinner. The resemblance of Praxagora's scheme to the Utopia of Plato's *Republic* will strike every reader. Both Aristophanes and Plato give precisely the same arguments in favor of common

The Ecclesiazousae

property in wives and children, that reverence toward a possible father, and the fear that the bystanders, out of filial duty, will always come to the help of the old in distress, will insure respect for the aged and harmony in the state. Plato certainly never meant that women should govern his ideal city, and his communism was limited to the ruling class. It may be admitted that a Utopia is fair game for caricature on the comic stage. But there are three arguments that must be met by those who assume that Plato was satirized in this comedy. The *Republic* was not published until several years after the play;[1] Plato's name is never mentioned by Aristophanes;[2] finally, the idea of a community of wives, though Aristotle in the *Politics* says that it is an innovation of Plato's, was by no means new. Euripides referred to it, and Herodotus had described just such a community among the Agathyrsi, a Dacian tribe, and had given precisely the same explanation as Plato and Aristophanes that such a system would secure harmony among men with so wide a range of filial and fraternal duties to observe.[3] It is of course possible that Plato's theories had been ventilated in Athens before 392, but, on the whole, it is safer to suppose that the *Ecclesiazousae* had no reference to the *Republic*, but was aimed, partly at the Athenian tendency to grasp at anything new, partly at the socialistic ideas that were current at that time of political and social depression following a disastrous war.[4]

[1] Krohn conjectures that the first four Books, with their passing reference to a community of women and children in 424 A, appeared before 392, and that the fifth, with its development of the communistic scheme, was an answer to the ridicule of Aristophanes.

[2] Wolf, Meineke, and others identify the repulsive Aristyllus of *Eccl.* 647, *Plutus* 314, *Telmessians fr.* 538 (Kock), with the philosopher. But in any case the allusions are slight, and we know from the *Phaedo* 59 B that its author was known to Athens, not as Aristocles or its diminutive Aristyllus, but as Plato.

[3] Cp. Eur. *fr.* 655 (Nauck) and Herod. 4. 104.

[4] For a reference to Plato's Utopia are Wolf, Meineke, Krohn, Pfleiderer, Denis; against are Gomperz, Christ, Campbell, Stallbaum, Sittl, Lutoslawski, Sitzler.

The *Plutus* (388 B.C.) is an allegory, a picture of society turned upside down by the redistribution of wealth. Plutus, the god of riches, had been blinded by Zeus, who feared for his own supremacy should the good alone possess the advantage of wealth. Advised by the poor but virtuous Chremylus, Plutus recovers his sight in the temple of Asclepius, and can now follow his own inclinations and visit only the deserving. Society is at once transformed. In a turn of Fortune's wheel the sycophant, or professional informer, loses his trade, the rich old woman her mercenary lover. The gods, on whom men no longer depend, must starve without their sacrifices, and Hermes is driven to take a scullion's place with Chremylus, who is the first to profit by the god's recovery. Plutus himself is installed on the Acropolis of Athens. Of all the Aristophanic comedies this is the least in touch with life. The almost total suppression of the chorus is an eclipse of gayety, and the scarcity of choral lyrics betrays a weakness inherent in the Aristophanic plot, the lack of unity. The pert witticisms of the slave Carion, a foretaste of later comedy, are a poor substitute for the jovial fun of the earlier plays. Twice only does the comic genius light up the frigid atmosphere of allegory. Carion's account of a night spent in the temple of Asclepius is an excellent satire on the greedy priests of the god of medicine and the credulous invalids who flock to take the 'cure.' The agon (415–612) is an effective debate between pale Poverty, with her appearance as of an Erinnys escaped from tragedy, and the rash beings who are planning to restore sight to Plutus. Poverty declares that, if she be banished, there will be an end of all the arts and crafts that make life agreeable, and of the trading that makes it possible. Necessity is the mother of industry, the motive power of life, and hunger, as Persius said later, is the best teacher.[1] The idea was taken up again, in the Alexandrian age, by the old fisherman in Theocritus. Poverty, though she does not move Chremylus, has the best of the argument, but since Aristophanes does not proceed to show the economic difficulties in

The Plutus

[1] Cp. Plautus, *Stichus* 1. 3. 24. Paupertas . . . omnes artes perdocet.

a society where one need only be good to be rich, the play lacks point. The chorus, of small farmers of Attica, plays an insignificant part, and there is no parabasis. Lucian borrowed the characters of Hermes, Plutus, and Poverty, with certain of Poverty's arguments, for his picture of the vicissitudes of fortune in *Timon the Misanthrope*, Shakespeare's theme. An earlier *Plutus*, of which we have a few fragments, was played in 408 B.C., but it is impossible to decide to what extent it resembled the later version. It was probably more political, and better furnished with choral parts. Our version was a favorite play with the Byzantine schools and is rich in scholia.

Aristophanes died in 385, within a few years of the performance of the second *Plutus*. His last two comedies, the *Cocalus* and the *Aeolosicon*, were produced under the name of his youngest son, Ararus. Both were parodies of tragic themes and the tragic style, and both are lost, save for a few fragments. The *Cocalus* dealt with the violent end of King Minos in Sicily, and seems to have had a plot with a regular intrigue and recognition, like a Euripidean play; or, still more, like the plays of the New Comedy.

The first duty of a comic poet at Athens was to raise a laugh, and no sense of decency, no shadow of the proprieties, ever restrained the genial humor of Aristophanes. The gross language which Aristotle set down as typical of Old Comedy offended his less robust taste, and in his extant works, at least, he ignores Aristophanes. He speaks with approval of the more subtle humor of the later comedians who had abandoned the satiric type, the poets, that is to say, of Middle Comedy, whose wit entertained the Athens that he knew. But Aristophanes was a man of strong and serious prejudices. His plays are not only a monument of Athenian wit at its most genial, most brilliant, and most licentious, but a manifesto of the poet's personal creed. Conservatism, the sanctity of tradition, is his thesis, and there is not a comedy in which one may not see Aristophanes trying to stop the current, protesting against the new manners, new religions.

new philosophy, new rhetoric, literature, and music. The academic life of the fifth-century Athens with its crowd of sophists and professors of all sorts, teaching the young to be too clever, filled him with disgust. For him, to be complex was to be degenerate. He was a true son of the race which always held it a sign of decadence when a fresh string was added to the lyre. The speculative tendency, which makes fifth-century Athens so interesting to us, he met with ridicule sharpened by distrust ; the rhetorical studies that were already bearing fruit in the Attic orators were in his eyes a sort of literary dishonesty which reflected moral weakness ; the " twitterings " of Euripidean lyrics, the complicated turns and flourishes of Phrynis, the imitative music of Philoxenus, Cinesias, with his ' deep blue dithyrambs,' Agathon's effeminate and wanton songs, the whole development of instrumental music towards greater expressiveness and a wider range of sentimental effect, he opposed as Pherecrates and Cratinus had opposed them, because he thought they sapped the strength of Athens. His own lyrics won him the name of ' the darling of the Graces.' They show great variety, though no great depth, and can be charming, as, for instance, the summons to Procne in the *Birds*, or can express real religious feeling, as the hymn to Demeter in the *Frogs*. Plato's epigram in the *Anthology* dwells on the lyrical gift of Aristophanes : —

> *The Graces sought a heavenly shrine which ne'er*
> *Shall come to nought,*
> *And in thy soul, immortal poet, found*
> *The shrine they sought.*[1]

But his real talent was best displayed in the mordant raillery of the parabases.

Aristophanes claimed[2] that he used the speech of Athens, observing the golden mean between the cockney dialect of the town-bred citizen and the rustic tongue of Attica. His iambic trimeters show the usual comic variations from the tragic measure, frequent

[1] 4. 13. Rogers' translation.

[2] *fr.* 685.

resolutions and divisions of the line, and are sometimes interrupted by that sudden descent to reality through the use of prose, which was a common effect of the comic stage.

The swift decline of Old Comedy with its political interest followed close on the fall of Athens in 404. For sixty or seventy years it had been a weapon of the aristocratic opposition, always kept bright by use. But the excesses of the oligarchy in their brief term of power (404–403) must have disillusioned even Aristophanes. Amnesty was in the air, and the poet could no longer attack with the old sincerity a democracy that had proved the only hope of Athens. In his last two extant plays, at any rate, he turned from politics, and allowed himself only a few passing allusions, such as the thrust at Agyrrhius,[1] who had succeeded Thrasybulus as general in 389. Personalities like this, never, we may be sure, failed to scandalize and entertain the comic theater at Athens. But a satire on public affairs could only succeed so long as the poet and his audience had the spirit to amuse and be amused. The effort to repress personal allusions had been renewed more than once in the last half of the fifth century, notably by the decree of Syracosius in 416, but they were futile, and it was not by the power of the law that political comedy fell silent. Times were changed, and an Athens that existed only through the indulgence of Sparta was no fit setting for energetic political satire. The economy preached by the archons was perhaps a transparent excuse, but they acted on it, and already in the *Frogs* Aristophanes speaks of the meager allowance that must now furnish his chorus. It is the practical suppression of the chorus, as we see it in the *Ecclesiazousae* and the *Plutus*, that marks the transition from aggressive political comedy to the comedy of manners, from the Old to the New. The chorus had been the weapon of the Old Comedy, which perished with its sting.

Middle Comedy is a division that was adopted no earlier than Hadrian, but the name has persisted as a useful literary convention,[2] though it is often difficult in the case of the extant

[1] *Plutus* 176. [2] Rejected by Kock in his Introduction to Vol. II.

fragments and titles to draw a real distinction between Middle and New. Of the 800 plays of the Middle Comedy which, in the third Christian century, Athenaeus could read, comedies which entertained the Athenians for more than sixty years, not so much as a single scene survives. Our judgment of the whole from the numerous extant fragments of thirty-nine poets is handicapped, partly by their brevity, partly by the circumstances of their quotation. A number were preserved by Stobaeus when he compiled his educational *Anthology* in the sixth Christian century, and among others who quoted the Middle and New Comedy was Clement of Alexandria (*floruit* 200 A. D.) in his *Patchwork*, or *Miscellany*. Other scholars and antiquaries contributed their share. But the writer to whom we owe the greatest number of extracts is Athenaeus, whose *Literary Dinner*, written about 230 A. D., is crowded with quotations from the comic poets, chosen, since such was his preoccupation, for their reference to the affairs of the table, and especially to cookery. It was not an Anthology so much as a display of pedantic erudition. Our whole conception of Middle and New Comedy is colored by the culinary interests of Athenaeus. He could only, however, quote what he found, and it is evident that long lists of food, pictures of gluttony always mysteriously amusing to the temperate Greeks, descriptions of elaborate dishes, of fish and wines, played an important part in later comedy. The *chef* who is an artist with a philosophy of his own — for the sophists have invaded even the kitchen — was a stock figure. The parasite, whose agreeable profession was next best, said Antiphanes, to being a millionaire, was the inevitable accompaniment of all this dining. That is Middle Comedy on its farcical side. It differs from the old in its choice of themes. It was more subtle, more complex, less gross. Mythological travesties and allegories were the favorite material. The myths that had been taken most seriously by the lyric and tragic poets were considered most appropriate for ridicule, and many of the titles of the comedies might have been drawn from a list of tragedies.[1]

[1] *E.g.* the *Alcestis*, *Bacchae*, and *Andromeda* of Antiphanes.

Though the poets were by no means all Athenians, the scene was usually laid in Athens, and the wildest anachronisms were part of the game. The poets, Sappho, Archilochus, or Hesiod, figured in comedies that had a literary flavor, and contained, no doubt, much literary criticism mixed with farce, like Jonson's *Poetaster* or Sheridan's *Critic*. The philosophers and their tenets were not spared. Middle Comedy in its allusions to the Lyceum, the Pythagoreans, the Academy and Plato kept up the tradition of Aristophanes. *The good you'll get from her, my master, I apprehend no more than the Good of Plato,* cries a slave in the *Amphicrates* of Amphis,[1] and in the *Phaedrus* of Alexis,[2] the lover who goes "palely loitering" between Athens and the Piraeus consoles himself, as a Platonist might, with framing a definition of Love. From such echoes and misunderstandings of the philosophers one sees how Athenian society, like modern society before science became fashionable, disliked and distrusted every new theory.

Already there are comedies of intrigue drawn from Bohemian Athens, social satires in which courtesans and the adventures of the *demi-monde* have a prominent place. To judge from the long list of such titles as the *Perfumer*, the *Doll Maker*, the *Shepherd*, the *Pilot*, the *Jeweler*, and the like, there was hardly a profession or calling that had not its appropriate play. Family relations were exploited in such plays as the *Twins*, or the *Sisters*, and humorous misunderstandings in a play like the *Double*, a forerunner of the *Comedy of Errors*. Finally, there are the comedies of character, the *Miser*, the *Meddler*, the *Misanthrope*, which are a connecting link between Middle and New Comedy. How the plots were managed in these plays, with their wide range of interest, we cannot tell. But since there was no chorus to form transitions, there was, no doubt, more effort after careful composition and a regular *dénouement* than in Old Comedy.

Of the individual poets of Middle Comedy few deserve mention. ANTIPHANES (b. 408 B.C.) was a foreigner, probably from Asia

[1] *fr.* 6 (Kock). [2] *fr.* 245.

Minor, who, in his long career, won thirteen first prizes. We have fragments of about 200 plays, whose subjects range through the varied interests and pursuits of fourth-century Athens, from the philosophic schools to a dinner *menu*.

Antiphanes

ALEXIS, the uncle of Menander, from Thurii in Magna Graecia (*floruit circa* 348–288 B.C.), belongs to both Middle and New Comedy, though he is counted with the earlier type. In his long life he is said to have written 245 comedies. In the refinement of his style, his appreciation of the sensuous side of life, his tolerant philosophy, we see the family likeness to his nephew Menander, the genius. But not even the fragments of Alexis are exhilarating reading. Beside the monstrous jests of Aristophanes, which by their very excess of vitality and vigor often touched the sublime, the trivial gossip, the cynicism, the *gourmandise* of the poets of Middle Comedy show bloodless and second rate.

Alexis

In the year after Chaeronea (337), DIPHILUS of Sinope, a colony on the shores of the Black Sea, began to produce his plays at Athens. It is not from the extant fragments alone that he must be judged. The longest of our collection of over a hundred deal with cooking as a fine art, dining, and parasites. But in the Latin adaptations of Plautus (b. about 254 B.C.), in the idyllic *Rudens* (Cable) with its flavor of country life by the seashore, or the *Casina*, a comedy of intrigue and the *demi-monde*, or the scene in the *Adelphi* (*Brothers*) of Terence which he took from the *Sworn to Die Together* of Diphilus, we may see at least a reflection of the latter's talent. The titles of his plays prove that, like Alexis, he wrote, on occasion, in the manner of Middle Comedy, with travesty of the tragic myths and style.

Diphilus

It is in the Latin *comoedia palliata*, Comedy in a Greek dress, that we must look for the characteristics of another poet of the New Comedy, PHILEMON, the rival of Menander. He was born at Soli, a Greek colony on the coast of Cilicia, about 360 B.C., was well established in the good graces of the Athenians when Menander began to compete, and continued

Philemon

to hold his own against the Athenian poet. *Do you not blush, Philemon, when you gain a victory over me?* asked Menander. The anecdote sums up the tradition that Philemon's successes were sometimes due to corrupt influence. The *Mercator* (*Merchant*) and the *Trinummus* (*The Small Coin*) of Plautus were adaptations of Philemon, while the *Mostellaria* probably reflects his *Ghost*.[1]

Menander

Menander of Athens, the 'shining star' of New Comedy, was born in 342. He was the son of an Athenian general, Diopeithes, who, in 341, incited by the anti-Macedonian party, made a raid in the Chersonese, and, when Philip protested, was defended by Demosthenes in his speech *On the Chersonese*. Menander's uncle was the popular comedian Alexis, and he must have come under his influence. Theophrastus, the author of the *Characters*, was his friend, and he may well have enjoyed the instruction of Aristotle, who died when he was nineteen. Menander made his *début* in 321 with the *Angry Man*, a title which reminds us of the *Characters* of Theophrastus. The Athens that he now set himself to entertain had failed in its last stand against Macedonia in 322, after Alexander's death, and during the thirty years of the poet's career the Athenians were content with a state of inglorious inertia as part of the Macedonian empire. They consoled themselves with the enjoyment of material prosperity, and were ripe for the quietism of Epicurus, a philosophy that all could put into practice after a fashion that varied with the more or less refined taste of the individual. For ten years (317–307) Demetrius of Phalerum, the Athenian, was viceroy of Athens under Macedonia. Menander, who was only three years his junior, and had been a fellow-pupil in the school of Theophrastus, was the intimate friend of Demetrius, and, during the brief term of his prosperity, shared the luxuries and dissipations of the idol of Athens. After the fall of Demetrius, Menander was a spectator of the triumphs of the son

[1] In the forthcoming (Ptolemaic) *Hibeh Papyri*, found in 1902, Grenfell and Hunt will publish a new fragment of Philemon.

of another Macedonian general, Demetrius Poliorcetes (the 'Besieger'), who sailed from Asia to 'free Athens.' During Menander's later years, Athens passed, now into the control of Cassander, now of Demetrius. He died in the harbor of the Piraeus in 291, fulfilling his own saying that 'whom the gods love die young.' While their masters changed, the interest of the Athenians in comedy remained constant. Menander wrote for them more than a hundred comedies, from which are preserved about 1100 fragments. But several hundreds of these fragments are nothing to our purpose and, until lately, we had no whole scene from which we might judge of his talent as a dramatist. In 1898 was published a papyrus fragment of the *Countryman* (*Georgos*), which gives us a continuous extract of 87 iambic trimeters. In spite of much mutilation, we can read the soliloquy of a youth who finds the preparations for his wedding in full swing and flees in dismay from the house. Myrrhine, the mother of a girl whom he has seduced, comes on and converses, first with her confidante, Philinna, and then with Davus, the slave of Cleaenetus the countryman. Davus announces that his old master is willing to marry the unfortunate girl. Five other fragments of the same play, which we already possessed, add practically nothing to our knowledge of the *dénouement* or of the working out of the character of the hero. But this was evidently a comedy of intrigue, with the character of the countryman come to town supplying the sort of study for which Menander was famous. Of *The Girl with the Short Hair* (*Perikeiromene*) 51 verses have been recovered among the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*.[1] It is a comedy of jealousy, remorse, and reconciliation. Polemon, a sort of Othello, has a mistress Glycera who had been a captive of war. He discovers her in the society of a strange young man, and in a fury of jealousy cuts off her hair and drives her from the house. The stranger proves to be Glycera's half brother. We have the scene near the close of the play in which Polemon expresses his remorse.

The Countryman

[1] Vol. II, London, 1899.

Glycera has been restored to her long-lost father, and two weddings are impending, her own to Polemon, and her brother's to the daughter of a neighbor.

In the third volume of the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*[1] were published fragments amounting to sixty verses of the *Flatterer* (Κόλαξ), the play from which Terence, as he admits in his Prologue, borrowed the characters of Gnatho, the parasite, and Thraso, the swaggering soldier, for his *Eunuch*. But it was not from the *Flatterer* that Terence took his plot, for he did not hesitate to 'contaminate,' to draw from two plays of Menander for the benefit of one of his own. The new fragments, in spite of much mutilation, reveal a course of events very different from the story of Terence's *Eunuch*.[2] Together with the fourteen verses published in the *Flinders Petrie Papyri* (1891) and ascribed by Blass to the *Flatterer*, they tantalize by their brevity and mutilated condition, while they add fresh evidence of Menander's talent for characterization and witty dialogue.[3]

It is impossible to have a happier, a more humane reputation in literature, than Menander's, so firmly maintained, based, so far, on remains so slight. For after all it is the raptures of those who could read Menander as a whole, the exclamation of Aristophanes of Byzantium, one of a class not given to enthusiasm, *O Menander! O Life! Which of you copied the other?*; Caesar's epigram, with the phrase that labelled Terence forever as a 'halved Menander'; Quintilian's saying that from Menander's mold issued every human type; the acknowledged adaptations in Terence's finest comedies;[4] these are the proofs of Menander's

[1] London, 1903. [2] Leo in *Gött. Nachr.* 1903.

[3] It is too early to say anything definite about a papyrus fragment of Menander, unearthed only this year (1906) in Egypt, by M. Lefebre. The leaves, it is said, are not continuous, but there are five hundred lines from each of two plays, and about two hundred lines from two others, or twelve hundred in all. This should prove enough for an independent valuation of Menander.

[4] "Pour moi, je crois entendre l'Ombre de Ménandre, par chacun de ces vers aimables qui nous sont arrivés en débris nous dire, Pour l'amour de moi, aimez Térence." — SAINTE-BEUVE in *Nouveaux Lundis* V.

greatness that stir the imagination and do more than the disjointed fragments to convince us that the sudden and mysterious loss of those hundred plays of 'the golden' poet is the severest that has befallen Greek literature. "For us," says George Meredith, "Terence shares with his master the praise of an amenity that is like Elysian speech, equable and ever gracious, like the face of the Andrian's young sister: —

Adeo modesto, adeo venusto, ut nihil supra.

The celebrated *flens quam familiariter*, of which the closest rendering grounds hopelessly on harsh prose, to express the sorrowful confidingness of a young girl who has lost her sister and dearest friend, and has but her lover left to her; 'she turned and flung herself on his bosom, weeping as though at home there;' this our instinct tells us must be Greek, though hardly finer in Greek."[1]

Aristotle did not live to see the comedies of Menander, but they would probably have met the taste of one who disliked the grossness and abuse of Old Comedy. Menander, unlike Aristophanes, effaced his own personality, made no direct appeal to the audience that might break the illusion, but aimed at verisimilitude. All the emotions and weaknesses of the human heart were the text of his plot and of the good sayings which make the fragments a storehouse of proverbs. With his plays love took permanent possession of the stage. 'Each play has its love story,' said Ovid. 'That is why they are read by all the boys and girls of Rome.'[2] All the variations of the passion, its jealousies, quarrels, reconciliations, miseries and delights, selfishness and self-sacrifice, which had been totally absent from Old Comedy, were now the essential interest of comedy grown romantic and pathetic. Here Menander did but follow in the steps of Euripides, his chief model. But if love was now the dominant interest, there was a wide field for Menander's genius for painting types of character, with every

[1] *The Idea of Comedy* p. 44.

[2] *Tristia* 2. 370, *pueris virginibusque.*

man's ruling passion, and the man as he played the slave to it, hit off in these pictures of the human soul. Perhaps the best example of his power to launch a type is his boasting soldier, the Thraso of Terence, the *miles gloriosus* of Plautus, whom we meet again with a new face in two Shakespearean characters, Pistol and Parolles. Intrigue, with the regular progress of seduction, separation, recognition, and marriage was handled by Menander with consummate talent. Literary reminiscence, parody, so attractive to the poets of the Old and Middle Comedy, could not interest one whose model was real life. His plays, as the expression of a well-balanced, tolerant, and serene temperament, were a godsend to the anthologist on the lookout for a *mot*, a maxim, a neatly turned generalization. That he could express his philosophic serenity in the grand manner, we see from a fragment: *Happiest is the man, as I count happiness, Parmeno, who is admitted to gaze on all these splendid and solemn sights, this common sun,*[1] *the stars, water, fire, and the clouds, and having gazed, forthwith returns whence he came, without his share of grief. Though you should live a hundred years, or but few, these sights will ever be the same. Grander than these it will never be yours to see.*[2]

Of the outward appearance of one who secured for himself all the glory of the New Comedy, the seated statue in the Vatican was long regarded as a portrait. But the sentiment that had gathered about the care-lined face of that figure has been dissipated by modern archaeologists, who could not but reject the too hasty identification of Visconti.[3]

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[1] Cp. Gray, *Vicissitude:* "The common sun, the air, the skies To him are opening paradise."

[2] *fr.* 481.

[3] Furtwängler, *Masterpieces* 309, n. 3.

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CHAPTER XVI

XENOPHON

Xenophon, son of Gryllus, was born in the Attic deme Erchia about 430 B.C. His father was a rich land owner, and he grew up with the tastes of a country gentleman for farming and all forms of sport. In all else that he undertook he has been accused of dilettanteism, but in the pleasures of the chase he is generally allowed to have been an expert. He was still an impressionable youth, pursuing the regular Athenian education for a man of his class, and doubtless, like his friend Proxenus, attending the lectures of the fashionable sophists, when he fell under the mesmeric influence of Socrates. The extraordinary and almost fanatic specialization of Socrates makes his pupils seem many-sided by contrast. Few of them, moreover, were attracted, like Plato, to the life of contemplation, and Xenophon was conspicuously one of those who are born for action and adventure. In 401, against the advice of Socrates, he cast in his lot with his Boeotian friend Proxenus who was employed by Cyrus to recruit Greek mercenaries for a secret expedition against his brother Artaxerxes, the Great King. To take service openly under a Persian prince who had so lately helped Sparta to humiliate Athens was not Xenophon's intention, and he went with the expedition as a free lance, 'neither general, nor officer, nor soldier,' as he says in the *Anabasis*.[1] Fifteen months later he returned to Greece as leader of the Ten Thousand, the Greek mercenaries who had survived the defeat of Cyrus and the hardships of the famous retreat. In 399 he was free to return to Athens. But a disciple of Socrates, who had taken sides with Cyrus, and was known to have leanings to Sparta, could not find

[1] 3. 1. 4.

the atmosphere of the restored democracy agreeable. In 396 he took service with Agesilaus of Sparta, and for two years shared the campaigns of the Spartan king, who had set out from Aulis, like another Agamemnon, persuaded that he was about to overthrow the Persian empire. When Agesilaus was recalled from Asia by the Spartans in 394, Xenophon, who, like so many of the exiled sons of Athens, took the first opportunity of revenging himself, fought on the Spartan side against the allied Athenians and Thebans at Coronea (394 B.C.). Whether the decree which banished him from Athens was the result of his presence at Coronea, or, as seems less likely, of his support of Cyrus, we do not know. At any rate the Spartans repaid his services by the gift of an estate at Scillus in the plain of Elis, not far from Olympia, and there he lived for twenty years, wrote his books, hunted, built a temple to Ephesian Artemis, and brought up his two sons, Gryllus and Diodorus, who fought at Mantinea with the Athenian cavalry in 362. The heroic death of Gryllus at Mantinea was thenceforward a favorite theme of rhetorical panegyric in the patriotic prose and verse of Greece. Xenophon had left his Peloponnesian estate in 371, when the Eleans, becoming hostile to Sparta, plundered Scillus. His last years may have been spent at Athens. He died about the middle of the fourth century, but the place and the exact date of his death are alike uncertain.

As an independent thinker Xenophon has no claim to distinction. In the four works which he devoted to the memory of Socrates, the *Apology*, the *Memorabilia*, the *Symposium*, and the *Oeconomicus*, he reflects the superficial estimate of Socrates by a practical man who admired his master's ethical teaching without completely grasping his philosophy. Xenophon had no taste for speculation, and could not appreciate the subtleties of the Socratic dialectic.

The Memorabilia

He is not at his best as a reporter of the conversations of Socrates in the *Memorabilia*, a work whose historical value is much debated. He was chiefly interested in the practical precepts of Socrates on education, exercise, diet, duty to one's kindred, religious observances, and the like. The Socratic method

of arriving at definitions he describes last of all,[1] and declines to pursue the subject at any great length. His talent lay rather in describing action and adventure than in reproducing for the reader the magnetic personality of a great teacher. Apart from its historical interest, the *Memorabilia* has preserved for us the celebrated and often-quoted epideictic apologue of Prodicus on the 'Choice of Heracles,' which Xenophon makes Socrates recite to Aristippus the Cyrenaic[2] as a sort of sermon against self-indulgence. Xenophon's *Apology of Socrates*[3] and his *Symposium* suffer from the classical contrast that they invite with the Platonic works under the same title. In the former, which is a brief semi-oratorical composition, the sort of thing that was quite beyond his range, Xenophon lays stress on the conviction of Socrates that, for him, death was better than life, the goal for which all his life had been a preparation. The setting of the *Symposium* is the house of Callias, and the banquet is supposed to take place in 421 when the author was a mere child. It was probably written before the *Symposium* of Plato, who reproduced certain details, notably the famous comparison of Socrates with the images of Silenus.[4]

The Apology

In the *Oeconomicus*, Socrates converses with Ischomachus, an Athenian, on the management of his house, his young wife, and his farm. It contains an amusing picture of Xenophon's ideal housewife, broken in to her duties by her husband, induced by his arguments to give up rouge, and powder, and high heels, and to consider the active care of her household the most exhilarating form of exercise. From the recital of his wife's duties Ischomachus passes to his own outdoor occupation of farming, 'the most pleasant, the noblest, the dearest to gods and men.'

The Oeconomicus

[1] *Memorabilia* 4. 6. [2] 2. 1.

[3] Zeller denies the Xenophontic authorship of the *Apology*.

[4] Cp. Xen. *Symp.* 4. 19 with Plat. *Symp.* 215 B. For a full account of Plato's echoes of Xenophon, see the editions by Hug and Rettig of the Platonic *Symposium*. Bruns in *Neue Jahrb.*, 1900, maintains the priority of Plato's work, and is followed by Gomperz.

The *Anabasis* is a description of the 'upgoing' and the retreat of the mercenary force of Greeks which set out in 401, ostensibly to help Cyrus to reduce the troublesome hill tribes of Pisidia, but actually to seize the throne from his brother. Their march was from Sardis through Asia Minor and Lycaonia to Tarsus, thence, across the Arabian desert, along the banks of the Euphrates, to Cunaxa. There Cyrus was slain in battle, and the enterprise collapsed. The leaderless Greeks had now to face the dilemma that must always have threatened Greek mercenaries on Asiatic service. Their patron had fallen, and if they were not willing to change sides and intrust themselves to the good faith of Artaxerxes, they must begin a weary retreat through a hostile country. At this crisis, a blunder of the Spartan general, Clearchus, betrayed him, with the other officers of the Greek force, including Proxenus, into the trap set for them by Tissaphernes. And now Xenophon comes forward as the hero of the *Anabasis*. He had a decided gift of oratory, as we may see from his report of his own speeches to the army. His abilities were at once recognized by the leaderless Ten Thousand, who elected him a general, and followed his advice in their retreat northward. They had now to march through an unknown country, harassed by the army of Tissaphernes. They made their way painfully through the hostile, independent tribes of Carduchia (Kurdistan), then by wintry marches through Armenia and the country of the warlike Chalybes, till at last they came to Trapezus, a Greek colony on the coast of the Euxine: *They came to a mountain named Theche. When the van reached the summit they gave a loud cry. . . . And as the clamor grew ever louder and more insistent as more troops joined those that were shouting, Xenophon thought it must be something serious. He got on his horse and took Lycius and the cavalry to the rescue. Soon they heard that the soldiers were shouting, The sea! The sea! . . . Then they all came to the summit and wept for joy, and embraced one another and the generals and officers.*[1]

The Anabasis

Like most Greeks who went campaigning in Asia, the Ten

[1] *Anabasis* 4. 7.

Thousand yearned for home. Xenophon, who could better appreciate how unwelcome in their native land, how dangerous to the general peace would be this army broken loose, wished to found a Greek colony on the shore of the Euxine. But they preferred to continue their retreat along the coast, partly by sea, to Chalcedon. Thence they crossed to Byzantium and enlisted under a Thracian prince, Seuthes, who cheated them of their pay. Finally, the remnant, about six thousand, returned to Asia in 399, in the service of Sparta. Xenophon, who had so far shared their fortunes, now returned to Greece.

There is, no doubt, a good deal of invention in the *Anabasis*, a good deal of exaggeration by Xenophon of the dangers of the enterprise, and of his own exploits, influence, and resourcefulness. His later career does not convince us that he had greatly impressed his contemporaries with his talents as a leader of men. Nevertheless, the march of the Ten Thousand remains, in virtue of the *Anabasis*, the most famous retreat in military history, the high-water mark of what can be achieved by a small army isolated in a barbarous and hostile country. As he tells us in the *Hellenica*, Xenophon first published the *Anabasis* under the name of Themistogenes of Syracuse, a precaution that may have been intended to save his modesty, though it is not likely that any one was deceived by the pseudonym. Diodorus, when he wrote his account of the retreat in the Augustan age, ignored Xenophon altogether until he had to describe the expedition of Seuthes, at the close. And as Diodorus drew for his facts on Ephorus, a younger contemporary of Xenophon, his silence has been taken as a virtual repudiation of the latter's claim to the leading rôle.

Tradition made Xenophon the literary executor of Thucydides, and editor of the unfinished *History of the Peloponnesian War*. At any rate he seems to have intended his *Hellenica* to be a continuation or sequel of that work. He begins with the year 411, where Thucydides left off, and brings his account of Greek affairs down to 362, the date of the battle of Mantinea. He adopts the reckoning of Thucydides by summers

The Hellenica

and winters, and clearly makes an effort to imitate the Thucydidean manner and point of view. But he was not formed to write philosophical history of that pattern. His was rather the talent of a writer of historical romance, and the chief value of his narrative lies in his vivid descriptions and characterizations, the constant reflection of the personal experience of an acute and interested observer. The *Hellenica* is colored by the influence of Agesilaus, and the writer's unconcealed preference for Spartan ideals and methods.

Xenophon's political ideal was a military monarchy, with a benevolent despot such as he did not, apparently, expect Greece to produce. In his *Cyropaedia*, or *Education of Cyrus*, he draws an idealized portrait of the elder Cyrus, with an account of his education and his career. In this highly colored political romance he tried to show what might be hoped from a king who should have been trained in the Spartan discipline, and not without the Socratic dialectic. He places his ideal king in a Utopia which combines some of the features of the Spartan constitution with those of the Persian empire, the whole embellished with fictitious anecdotes. This moral tale of the ideal monarch's wisdom and temperance was, later, the model of more than one fabulous biography. It was peculiarly exasperating to Alexander the Great that, while his dearest ambition was to be, like Achilles, the immortal hero of an epic, the best his literary hangers-on could achieve was some absurd imitation of the *Cyropaedia* in which he was cast for the leading rôle.

The Cyropaedia

The *Hiero* is an imaginary dialogue between the poet Simonides and Hiero of Syracuse, in which the interlocutors enumerate the miseries and the counterbalancing advantages of a tyranny to the tyrant himself. Failing an ideal military absolutism, Xenophon, like Plato, thought that the next best constitution was the Spartan. His *Constitution of Sparta* is a panegyric of the social and political institutions of Lacedaemon.

The Hiero

A dilettante in philosophy and history, Xenophon was thoroughly qualified to write the treatise *On Hunting*, the *Cynegeticus*, which,

since Valckenaer (1768), has been frequently rejected as spurious. Plutarch, in the first Christian century, thought it genuine, while Arrian, who was nicknamed the New Xenophon because he closely modeled his works on those of the fourth-century historian, wrote his *Cynegeticus* without a suspicion that he was imitating a spurious composition. Xenophon, whose works are crowded with hunting metaphors and allusions to hunting, who, even in the *Anabasis* turns aside to tell us how the Greek cavalry hunted gazelles and bustards and ostriches in the Arabian desert, was of all men fitted by taste and training to write this encomium of sport, a companion piece to the *Oeconomicus* with its praise of farming. But the evidence of language is hard to ignore, and is on the whole against those who maintain the Xenophontic authorship. Why should Xenophon, in whose other writings the infinitive for the imperative is not found, use this construction 100 times in the *Cynegeticus?* And is it likely that one so devoted to the horse as Xenophon should write a treatise on hunting without any allusion to riding as one of the pleasures of the chase? The treatise closes with an attack on the educational methods of the sophists, quite in keeping with Xenophon's old-fashioned conservatism. The writer draws a sharp distinction between the sophists and the philosophers, such as was recognized by few, even in the fourth century, and was probably first emphasized in literature by Plato.[1]

The Cynegeticus

It is not to be expected that one who had separated himself from Athens and the fashions of Athens in early youth, and had spent some twenty years of his literary activity in a Spartan colony, should write the purest Attic. Xenophon used a great number of words that were un-Attic,[2] or considered by the critics too poetic

[1] So Radermacher. On the genuineness of the *Cynegeticus*, see Seymour in *Trans. A. P. A.*, 1878, who accepts as Xenophontic less than one half of the treatise, and Radermacher in *Rhein. Mus.* 51, 52, who rejects it altogether. Norden, *Antike Kunstprosa* I 431, thinks that it was written by a contemporary of Xenophon, and that its prooemium was added in the Graeco-Roman period, a product of the Second Sophistic.

[2] Sauppe counted 316 poetic, 99 Ionic, and 62 Doric words in Xenophon.

for Attic prose, and he did not hesitate to use the figures that belong peculiarly to poetry, such as anaphora and asyndeton. Though he was certainly familiar with the etiquette of prose composition in fourth-century Athens, he takes no pains to avoid hiatus, and when he employs the rhetorical figures, he gives no impression of aiming at effect. The naïve style in which he wrote is the most difficult of all to imitate, because it is the most sincere and the most simple. In all his writings one can detect the touch of the amateur, and he leaves one with the impression that here we have a country gentleman of a type easily paralleled in most countries and times, who in his youth was fortunate enough to take part in some very exciting incidents, and in the long leisure of his riper years devoted a very pretty talent to their description. In those peaceful days on his estate in Elis, he turned his mind to the problems of education and the art of life, and lived "like a second Cheiron," training his distinguished sons, as the Centaur trained Achilles, in the arts of hunting and war.

The school of Isocrates produced two minor fourth-century historians, Theopompus and Ephorus. THEOPOMPUS of Chios was born about 380 B.C. Trained by Isocrates in the art of rhetoric, he won distinction as a writer of panegyrics, traveled far and wide, and could boast that every considerable town in Greece had applauded his eloquence. The opportunities of these travels he turned to account in more than one historical work, a *History of Greece* which continued the history of Thucydides down to 393 B.C., and a *History of Philip* from 362 to the king's death in 336. This was a sequel to Xenophon's *Hellenica*, and, like the rest of his works, is lost, save for a few fragments and the analyses made by Photius. Polybius, who is never indulgent to his predecessors, criticises his ignorance of military affairs. He was, in fact, a rhetorician writing history,[1] and seems to have had the faults of his class, a vanity that surpassed even the complacency of Isocrates, and an overwrought style.

Theopompus

[1] *Oratori magis similis*, says Quintilian. See Dionys. Hal., *Letter to Pompeius* 6, for the characteristics of Theopompus.

Nothing could more closely resemble the Gorgianic manner than the style of certain of the fragments, especially the description of Philip.[1]

Ephorus

Ephorus, of Cyme in Asia Minor, was the contemporary and fellow-pupil of Theopompus at Athens. We have only scanty fragments of his *Universal History*, from the return of the Heracleidae to 340 B.C. This appears to have been a monument of industry, written in the elaborate manner of the Isocratic school, but uninspired by the philosophic insight of the true historian.

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II. Editions. *Ed. princ.*, Florence, 1516. Aldus, Venice, 1525. Dindorf, Oxford, 1852–1856. Sauppe, Leipzig, 1865–1868. Schenkl, Berlin, 1876. *Anabasis:* Hug, Leipzig, 1878. *Memorabilia:* Breitenbach, Berlin, 1886. *Hellenica:* Breitenbach, Berlin, 1873; Marchant and Underhill, Oxford, 1906. *Cynegeticus:* Pierleoni, Berlin, 1902.

III. Literature. Maass, *Parerga Attica*, Greifswald, 1890. Schacht, *De Xenophontis studiis rhetoricis*, Berlin, 1890. Joël, *Der echte u. der Xenophontische Sokrates*, Berlin, 1893; vol. II, 1901 (contains an excellent bibliography of Xenophon). Seymour in *Trans. A. P. A.*, 1878. Kaibel in *Hermes* 25. Lincke in *Hermes* 17. Radermacher in *Rhein. Mus.* 51, 52. Dürrbach in *Rev. des Études Grecques* 6. Roquette, *De Xenophontis vita*, Königsberg, 1884. Richards in *Class. Rev.*, 1898, 1899. Rosenstiel, *Ueber die eigenartige Darstellungsform in Xenophon's Cynegeticus*, Sondershausen, 1891. Sanders, *The Cynegeticus*, Baltimore, 1903. Cesareo, *I due Simposi*, Palermo, 1901. Hartman, *Analecta Xenophontea*, Leyden, 1887. Rutherford in *The New Phrynichus*, London, 1881.

IV. Lexica. Sturz, Leipzig, 1804. Sauppe, *Lexilogus Xenophonteus*, Leipzig, 1869.

V. Translation. Dakyns, London, 1897, 3 vols.

Ephorus and Theopompus

Fragments in Müller, *Frag. Hist. Graec.*, Paris, 1841–1849. Marx, *Ephori Frag.*, Karlsruhe, 1815. Klügmann, *De Ephoro*, Göttingen, 1860. Eyssonius, *Theopompus*, Leyden, 1829. Dellios, *Zur Kritik d. Theopomp*, Jena, 1880. Bünger, *Theopompea*, Strassburg, 1889.

[1] *fr.* 249.

CHAPTER XVII

THE EARLIER ORATORS : ISOCRATES

It is not until the latter half of the fifth century that oratory at Athens begins to count as literature. In the law courts and the Ecclesia, the assembly of the people, practical eloquence, forensic and political, had been rapidly developing. On certain public occasions when a panegyric or a funeral oration was required there was an opportunity for the third type, epideictic oratory, the oratory of display. But it was still unwritten, ephemeral. After all, there have always been good speakers, but it is a long step from spoken to written eloquence. The brilliant oratory of Pericles swayed the Ecclesia for thirty years, and there were great speakers before Pericles. But men like Aristeides or Themistocles spoke before rhetoric had become an art, and they left no more enduring monument than if they had been successful actors. Though Pericles may have profited from the dialectic of Zeno and the later Eleatics, Plato insists that he owed to the lofty speculations and the psychology of Anaxagoras the great thoughts which were a fine substitute for the rules of rhetoric.

Pericles

Pericles would have thought it beneath the dignity of his caste to publish his speeches as though they had been advertisements. That would have ranked him with the professional sophists. Thucydides in his history reports three of these speeches : the funeral oration over those who fell in the first year of the war, the exhortation to the Athenians to fight it out with Sparta, and his apologia when they held him responsible for their sufferings from the plague and the invasion of the second year, not long before his death. Like the rest of the Thucydidean speeches, they can never have been delivered in their present condensed form. By condensation they must have lost the special

characteristics of the rhetoric of Pericles, of the 'thunders and lightnings' with which, as Aristophanes says, he 'confounded all Greece.'[1] Two or three metaphors quoted by Aristotle in the *Rhetoric* are "winged words" that must have been preserved for a century by oral tradition. But the most effective description of the way in which Pericles impressed his hearers is given by Eupolis the comic poet, who published his first play in 429 and may well have heard Pericles speak. *A rapid speaker you call him, but besides that swiftness, persuasion sat upon his lips, — such a charm he worked, and, alone of all the orators, he used to leave a sting in those that heard.*[2] Such a sting in the wound must have been left with those who heard him say in a funeral speech on the young men who had fallen in the war that 'the city has lost its youth, as though one had robbed the year of its spring.'

The first contributor to the literature of eloquence was ANTIPHON, of the Attic deme Rhamnus. Of his life we know little, and that little is confused by biographers who failed to distinguish Antiphon the orator from the sophist mentioned by Xenophon. The year of his birth was probably about 480, so that he was the senior of Thucydides and somewhat younger than Gorgias. He was deeply influenced by Sicilian rhetoric and himself taught the art. Late in the fifth century the title 'logographer' meant, no longer, a historian of the primitive type, but a speech writer differing from the modern barrister chiefly in this important point, that not he, but his client, must deliver the speech that he had composed. Thucydides, who was, according to tradition, his pupil, says that no man of his time was superior to Antiphon in the art of conceiving an argument and expressing it, and of training others to speak in the law courts or the Ecclesia.[3] He was an extreme oligarch, one of a party that had long been plotting to overthrow the democracy, and when, in 411, their chance came, Antiphon was the soul of the plot that placed the Four Hundred in power. For about three months the oligarchs governed Athens. They fell in their turn, and Antiphon,

Antiphon

[1] *Acharn.* 550. [2] Eupolis, *fr.* 94. [3] 8. 68.

convicted of having negotiated with Sparta, was executed as a traitor to his country and his house was razed. Partly, no doubt, because of his reserve, — he avoided all public debate, — partly because the Athenians always distrusted one who was 'too clever,' too ingenious in argument, Antiphon had no great public career. His greatest success was his defense when on trial for his life, 'the best speech of the kind that was made up to my time,' says Thucydides, who is not easily moved to such praise. It was not preserved, but there are extant fifteen speeches, all dealing with murder cases, for it was in such sensational suits that he was a specialist. Twelve of these speeches are arranged in tetralogies, or groups of four, probably composed about 425 B.C. Each of the three *Tetralogies* deals with a fictitious case and includes the charge of the plaintiff, the reply of the defendant, the second speech of the plaintiff, and, finally, the second speech for the defense. They provide the skeleton of a judicial argument, the formula with no unessential details, and were intended as models of judicial rhetoric, as exercises for the schools. Three kinds of murder, by an enemy, accidental, and in self-defense, are handled with all the ingenuity of a sophistical rhetorician. Besides the *Tetralogies* we have three speeches written for actual use in the courts, *The Defense of Herodes* on his trial for murder at sea, *Against the Stepmother*, in which a son accuses his stepmother of poisoning his father, and the *On the Chorister*, the defense of a leader of the chorus, who is accused of poisoning a boy by giving him a draught to improve his voice. From all these one can reconstruct the method of Antiphon as he must have taught it in his lost handbook, his divisions of a speech, the niceties of his formal rhetoric. His oratory bears the marks of the teaching of the sophists. He uses their commonplaces, those passages of general import or gnomic tendency, stereotyped sentiments that could be inserted at a suitable place in any speech. The argument from probability, a favorite device of Sicilian rhetoric, condemned by Plato on moral grounds,[1] was constantly used by

The Tetralogies

[1] *Phaedrus* 273.

Antiphon, both in the fictitious and the real pleadings. He did not study, like Lysias, his younger contemporary, to express the êthos, the individual character, of his clients. He is always conventional and decorous in his appeals to the sympathies of his hearers. He stands for the severe and archaic style in oratory, and his periods lack the ease of the later speech writers. His images are, however, full of vigor, and, like Thucydides, he obtains his effects by the carefully considered position of single words.

It was a contemporary of Antiphon and a politician of anti-democratic convictions who wrote the pamphlet *On the Constitution of Athens*, first published in 424 B.C., one of the oldest extant specimens of Attic prose. Though it is plain from its historical allusions that it was composed about 424 when Xenophon was still a child, it was long ascribed to him and has survived only in the manuscripts of his works. It is an apologia for the workings of the democracy at Athens by one who was as strongly opposed to democratic principles as Theognis himself had been, and, like him, deplores the government of 'the best,' the 'quality,' that is, the aristocrats, by 'the baser sort.' But he is far from the violence of Theognis or Antiphon, and declares that, on the whole, the Athenians are making a success of their democracy and are likely to be satisfied with it for the present. There are some slight resemblances in thought and style to Thucydides, but there is no sufficient argument for assigning it to him, as one or two scholars are inclined to do.[1]

The tract On the Constitution of Athens

For the technique of oratory Antiphon did much, but he is reckoned with the practical orators rather than with the theorists. THRASYMACHUS of Chalcedon, the sophist, his younger contemporary, flourished in the last quarter of the fifth century. He composed political speeches as exercises, but delivered none, and was preëminently a technical writer on rhetoric. He is supposed to have founded the 'mixed' or

Thrasymachus

[1] *E.g.* Roscher in *Klio* I 172, and, with more reserve, Sittl, *Griech. Lit.* II 87. Boeckh assigned the treatise to Critias the oligarch.

'moderate' style, which rejected poetic words and novelties of language, avoided hiatus, though not rigidly, and aimed at elegance without visible effort. Thus he broke the way for writers like Plato and Isocrates. He had a reputation for commonplaces designed to rouse the emotions, suspicion, or anger, or pity,[1] and in the first Book of Plato's *Republic* we have a picture of the man himself, violent in argument, easily flustered by the dialectic of Socrates. Two rather long fragments survive of this industrious writer on technique, whose greatest contribution is that he made a real advance in the development of the rhythmic prose period.

Theodorus

He was followed by another theorist, THEODORUS of Byzantium (*floruit* 412), called by Plato a 'cunning speechwright.' He wrote text-books of rhetoric, and added fresh categories and classifications to the divisions of a speech. Both Thrasymachus and Theodorus pursued at Athens their profession as teachers of rhetoric. What one observes in the history of oratory and rhetoric about this time is that every theorist and every practical orator adds to the rules of the game, defines the etiquette more closely, contributes to the growth of oratory as an art. It was to the development of forensic, not political, eloquence that they directed their efforts.

Andocides

Antiphon is the first in the Alexandrian canon of ten Attic orators. Next to him is ANDOCIDES, of the Attic deme Cydathene. He was born about 440 B.C. of a family distinguished for generations in the wars and politics of Athens. We know nothing of his personal history until 415, a year memorable at Athens for the sailing of the disastrous expedition against Sicily, and for a mysterious incident that caused the delay of the fleet. This was the mutilation of the Hermae, the square, stone images of the god Hermes that stood before the door and in the courtyard of Athenian houses and temples to symbolize his guardianship over the intercourse of life, especially over the goings-in and comings-out, as well as the boundaries and the roads that mark the traffic of men. One night in May, 415 B.C., the

[1] Plato, *Phaedrus* 267.

Hermae were defaced. The discovery next day caused a panic in Athens. The sacrilege was interpreted by the people as an ill omen for the expedition on which they had staked so much. The gods who protected Athens were, they thought, alienated at the very opening of the enterprise. But what shook the nerves of the democratic party was their conviction that here was a mysterious signal of revolution, a sinister warning by those secret conspirators who were known to have been plotting to establish an oligarchy.[1] Something like a reign of terror followed. More than one informer denounced certain members of the party of Young Athens to which Andocides belonged, and he was arrested on suspicion. He denied his own guilt and saved his life by denouncing others. Shut out from the market place and the temples, practically an outlaw, he left Athens and spent ten years in travel and trading in Greece and Italy. He made two unsuccessful efforts to return to Athens: in 411 when he was imprisoned by the Four Hundred for furnishing supplies to the democratic army at Samos, and again in 410 or 409, when he delivered the speech in the Ecclesia *On the Return*, claiming a pardon for past offenses on the ground that he had served the state by securing for Athens a supply of corn from Cyprus. In the end he had to wait for the amnesty of 403, when he was completely reinstated and apparently forgiven the scandal of his youth. It was not, however, forgotten, and in 399, when he had become conspicuous in public life, he was accused of impiety in attending the Eleusinian festival from which he had been barred by the decree now sixteen years old. In defense he delivered the speech *On the Mysteries*, reviewing the incident of the Hermae, and denying the general charge of impiety. He was acquitted, and in 391 reappears as one of the ambassadors to Sparta. It was in the debate that followed his return from this mission that he made the speech *On the Peace*.[2]

Mutilation of the Hermae

On the Mysteries

[1] On the motive for the mutilation of the Hermae, cp. Wilamowitz, *Aristoteles u. Athen* II 113.

[2] Sittl, *Griech. Lit.* II 85, denies the genuineness of the *On the Peace*.

This was the close of his public career. Of his further adventures and the date of his death we know nothing. Andocides is one of the minor classics of Attic oratory. The speeches that have been mentioned are extant, besides two short fragments; a fourth speech *Against Alcibiades*, ascribed to him, is probably the work of a later sophist. Andocides was not one of those who, like Antiphon, mark an advance in the technique of eloquence. He seems to have been one of those youths of good family, of the type of Alcibiades, who turned to public life for excitement, and as the best theater for displaying what they had learned from the sophists. In spite of his place in the canon he was something of an amateur. Aristotle, Dionysius, and Quintilian, who were interested in rhetoric, have little or nothing to say about him, and when he is mentioned it is with a hint of disparagement. His style lacks uniformity, and falls below the genuine nobility of Antiphon. Sometimes he is content with the plain, unadorned speech of everyday life, sometimes he uses poetic images and language in order to be impressive. He has less art than any other orator in the canon, both in the framing of his sentences and the general arrangement of his subject.

Style

The life of Lysias (*circa* 440–380 B.C.) has a special interest. By descent he was a Sicilian, whose father Cephalus, on the advice of Pericles, had transferred to Athens his manufactory of weapons of war. There he ranked with the most wealthy and distinguished of the 'metics' or resident aliens, who could have little to do with politics since they had no political rights. Cephalus was one of those metics who, in view of their wealth, were admitted to equal opportunities of public service, though not of public office, with the regular citizens. In the first Book of Plato's *Republic*, we see him enjoying a mellow old age in his fine house at the Piraeus, the quarter of the metics, eager to hear philosophers talk, but withdrawing 'to attend to the sacrifices,' when the conversation about old age and the blessings of wealth develops into a discussion of an abstract kind. There, too, are his sons, Lysias and Polemarchus, Athenian by education, and

Lysias

associating with young Athenian aristocrats, the brothers of Plato. It was probably after the death of Cephalus that they went to Thurii, the new Athenian colony in Italy, where Lysias is said to have received lessons from Tisias, the Sicilian rhetorician. Thence they returned to the Piraeus, about 411. In 404 the oligarchy of the Thirty came into power, and, seizing the opportunity for plunder, put Polemarchus to death. Lysias fled to Megara. In the spring of the next year[1] he came back with the democrats, when, for his services to the party, Thrasybulus proposed that he should receive the rights of a full citizen. The resolution, though it passed the Ecclesia, was canceled on the motion of Archinus, and it was as a metic that Lysias at last settled down to repair his fortunes by professional speech writing at Athens. In the seven or eight years before his brother's death he had written on rhetoric and perhaps taught it, but it was in writing speeches for the law courts that he found his real vocation. It was probably in that prosperous period of his life before 404 that he devoted himself to epideictic oratory, and gained the reputation assigned to him by Plato in the *Phaedrus* as 'the cleverest writer of our time.'[2] In that dialogue, Phaedrus, the youthful admirer of Lysias, reads to Socrates a truly sophistical *jeu d'esprit* which he has just heard from the lips of Lysias himself.[3] This is the *Eroticus*, addressed by a lover to his beloved, a prose pleading where Pindar or Anacreon would have written an ode. This was a common exercise with the rhetoricians, another point at which they invaded the rights of poetry. Plato was bent on showing the frigidity and poverty of sophistical rhetoric compared with the dialectic of a philosopher, and he

The Eroticus

[1] This year has a literary as well as a political interest. It was during the archonship of Eucleides in 403 that the Ionic alphabet formally replaced the older Attic alphabet at Athens. Henceforth the official records show separate signs for the long and short *e* and *o* and the Ionic symbols for the double consonants.

[2] 228 A.

[3] Thompson, Blass, Egger, Sittl, are for, Croiset, K. F. Hermann, Steinhart, against, the Lysianic authorship of the *Eroticus*.

chooses a piece of writing on which Lysias had lavished the devices of the style of Gorgias, that extreme and too obvious art that abounds in antitheses, similar endings, repetitions of the idea for the sake of changing the language, and the like. Yet even Plato admired the polished periods and the perfect clearness that were to be the conspicuous merit of the forensic speeches of Lysias. The seven *Letters*, nearly all erotic, are of interest merely because they mark the first appearance of the letter as a piece of literature. Even in his later years Lysias had not altogether given up epideictic oratory. The *Olympiac Oration*, of which only a part is extant, preserved by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, was written in 388, and is in the main an exhortation to the assembled Greeks to agree among themselves and to beware of the new tyrant of Sicily, Dionysius, who had sent a showy deputation to the Olympic festival. The *Epitaphius*, or *Funeral Oration*, written in the manner of the similar speech of Gorgias, was probably composed for a fictitious occasion. Its authorship is disputed.[1] If, as seems likely, Lysias taught rhetoric before he devoted himself to speech writing, he must have composed the usual aids and commonplaces for his students; of a formal text-book of rhetoric we hear nothing.

Lysias was industrious in his profession of speech writing, and in the centuries after his death there was a tendency to ascribe to him any judicial speech written in 'the plain style' that had no certain author, just as, earlier, a gnomic elegy was likely to be gathered into the poems of Theognis. Of over four hundred compositions credited to Lysias in the Graeco-Roman period, Dionysius allowed 233 to be genuine. Of these we know 127 by title only, and possess thirty-four speeches whole, or in considerable fragments. Even of this collection a number of speeches are regarded as spurious, and still more are much mutilated. There are, in fact, less than twenty forensic speeches that can be taken to

[1] Blass, *Attische Beredsamkeit* I 442 ff., is inclined to reject it on the score of inferiorities of style. So too Wilamowitz, who places it in the third century.

represent in a complete form the special talents of Lysias in this field, which he made his own. The duty of a speech writer for the law courts did not include the actual delivery of the speech. The plaintiff or defendant in an Athenian court must be his own speaker.

Only one of the extant forensic speeches, that *Against Eratosthenes*, was delivered by Lysias himself. When the democracy was restored in 403, he hastened to avenge the death of Polemarchus by prosecuting Eratosthenes, one of the Thirty, who was responsible for his brother's arrest and imprisonment, and therefore, as Lysias contended, for his death also. We do not know the precise circumstances or setting of the indictment, nor its result. Eratosthenes and one other of the Thirty had dared to remain in Athens. Probably they intended to meet the public inquiry which was offered by the terms of the amnesty to those of the Thirty who had the courage to face it. This inquiry, rather than an ordinary murder trial, may have been the opportunity of Lysias.[1] The speech reviews at length the crimes of the Thirty, and gives a classical picture of the horrors of revolution and counter-revolution, always repeated in a Greek state. Lysias felt himself the spokesman of all whose kindred had been murdered in that year of terror and tyranny, above all he was the spokesman of the metics whom the Thirty had despoiled. After a recital of the facts, full of vivid descriptions and dramatic touches, he changes his tone of personal emotion, and in the peroration rises to the dignity of an impeachment. He bids 'the men of the city' who had not left Athens, like 'the men from the Piraeus' who had brought back the democracy, remember all their griefs, the desecrated temples, the impoverished city, the dead whom they had not been able to save: *You have heard,* he concludes, *you have seen, you have suffered, you have him in your hands—sentence him!*[2]

Against Eratosthenes

[1] Meier, Blass, Lipsius, and Jebb maintain, Rauchenstein opposes, this conjecture.

[2] *Against Eratosthenes* 100.

The indictment of Eratosthenes must have been the masterpiece of Lysias, and is certainly not surpassed by any of the extant speeches. But it was rather in those written for clients that he had a chance to show his talent for expressing character (êthos). The speechwright at Athens must have some of the arts of an actor. He must study his client, put himself in his shoes, make him speak as a man of his trade should speak, and, above all, take care that his own personality and professional training never show through. Of this art of securing verisimilitude Lysias was a master. The invalid who tries to prove that he ought not to be taken off the public relief list, the injured husband of the lower class pleading his right to kill the man who had estranged his wife's affection, the elderly metic, the rich farmer — of all these and many more he hit off the character and point of view, and so adjusted them that they would best appeal to a jury of average businesslike men.

Character drawing

Lysias was somewhat neglected by Aristotle, but Dionysius of Halicarnassus paid him an ungrudging tribute. A special danger with speakers trained in the schools of rhetoric to learn by heart stock passages was that they grew stale, repeated themselves, used their old commonplaces. Lysias, says Dionysius,[1] was peculiarly spontaneous, could be depended on for a fresh 'prooemium' or introduction, a fresh rhetorical argument, or a moral reflection that had not become hackneyed by use. Plato had no good word for the shrewd, little, legal minds of such as he saw thriving, sometimes at the expense of philosophers, in the courts of Athens. But even he admired the style of Lysias. It was clear, plain, and concise, purified of the poetic coloring that Gorgias had used to excess, though it by no means rejected the devices of antithesis, similar endings, balanced clauses, and the like. Lysias, unlike Thucydides, could manage an anacoluthon, could abandon the grammatical construction so as to make the idea clearer and give the hearer no shock. He achieved that exquisite simplicity which one only recognizes as the perfection of

Style

[1] *On Lysias* 17.

a difficult art when one tries to imitate it. His clients, always, of course, 'inexperienced in these affairs,' seemed sincere because they spoke so simply. It was part of the Lysianic 'charm' (χάρις), that his flow of simple language was never monotonous; yet he did not take his hearers by storm or carry them away on a tide of eloquence, like a Demosthenes; he sweetly disposed their minds, and won them by a perfect naturalness. We may agree with Longinus that, to prefer this faultless, low-pulsed art, "all toned down," to the inspired manner of Plato, is to have no ear for the grand style which no man can maintain without a lapse. For all that, the perfect reserve and appropriateness of Lysias made him the model of pure Attic speech to which men turned in later centuries, when the florid Asianic manner was corrupting public taste.

Little is known of the life of Isaeus. He lived and practiced law at Athens, perhaps as a metic, since there is a tradition that he was born at Chalcis. He was, at any rate, younger than Lysias, since his first extant speech was composed about 389, his latest about 353. There is a legend, not now generally accepted, that he was the favorite and almost exclusive teacher of Demosthenes. There is no trustworthy evidence that Isaeus was the pupil of Lysias, but he certainly imitated his style. He, too, was a speechwright, a noted expert in suits about contested wills and succession to property. Though he seems to have had no formal school of rhetoric, he left a text-book, which has perished. Of perhaps fifty speeches written for the courts, only eleven survive, all dealing with cases of inheritance. Isaeus was not a favorite with Greek and Roman writers on rhetoric. He falls between Lysias and Demosthenes, since he could not rival either, though he has some of the characteristics of both. Dionysius admits that he would not have written a special treatment of his oratory, had he not seen in it some of the germs of the eloquence of Demosthenes.[1] Of all the orators he comes nearest to Lysias in style, but he was less convincing, because in his speeches the expert showed through; he could not maintain the characterization of his client as naturally as Lysias.

Isaeus

[1] *On Isaeus* 20.

He was too clever: 'Even when he is telling the truth, you suspect him,' says Dionysius. He uses more rhetorical figures than Lysias, and more commonplaces, and is much more sensational, with frequent appeals to the emotions of the jury. One notable difference in his style is his avoidance of hiatus. Isocrates had added this piece of etiquette to the training of prose writers, and Isaeus follows the fashion though he is not by any means consistent.

Isocrates

In Isocrates (436–338), epideictic oratory, the oratory of display, touched the high-water mark. He was born in the Attic deme Erchia, the deme of Xenophon, the son of a prosperous flute maker, and it is evident that, like the young Hippocrates in Plato's *Protagoras*, he went to school with the sophists, Prodicus certainly, and possibly Protagoras, in order to fit himself for a public career. But he was doomed to feel himself through life a statesman *manqué*. A weak voice and an incurable diffidence, not unusual in one so vain, barred him from such distinctions. No wonder that he speaks with envious admiration of the gift of self-confidence as essential to an orator's success, and complains bitterly that one might as well not have the rights of a citizen if one cannot use them. The Peloponnesian war, which helped to enrich the family of Lysias, did not encourage the sale of flutes, and in its later years Isocrates lost his fortune. He spent some time in Thessaly studying under Gorgias, who was then living there, and on his return to Athens, rhetoric, which had so far been for him the hobby of a rich amateur, became his profession. For a time, indeed, he was, like Lysias, a speechwright, but it did not suit Isocrates to make an art of sinking his own personality in that of a client. About 393 he opened a school of rhetoric, and soon became the most distinguished professional teacher in Greece, making more money than all his rivals put together. His course was from three to five years, and was attended by students from all parts. In his school, which Cicero called 'the oratorical laboratory,' were trained men like Timotheus, the famous general and diplomat, orators like Hypereides and Lycurgus, historians such as Theopompus and Ephorus,

not to speak of tragedians, rhetoricians, and the like, or those who came because there was to be had the most fashionable and expensive "finishing," the nearest approach to the hall-mark of a university education that the time afforded.[1] The activity of Isocrates extended through the next fifty-five years, and was not confined to teaching.

Plato disliked the Isocratean method of teaching rhetoric, and may well have been jealous of the influence of the famous school. At any rate, in the *Phaedrus*, long after Isocrates was established as a professor of epideictic oratory, Plato makes Socrates prophesy a brilliant future for the young writer in whom he saw a gift for philosophy that might carry him far. Socrates hoped that Isocrates might yet be inspired by some nobler impulse to turn from rhetoric and give himself to philosophy. The passage in the *Phaedrus*[2] reads like a sarcasm. For Isocrates, when it was written, had not become a philosopher, though he loves to speak of his rhetoric as his 'philosophy.'

He had the artistic temperament with all its qualities and defects. But he was at any rate a publicist if he could not be a public man, and he dignified his professional life by writing political pamphlets. Such was the *Panegyricus*, his masterpiece, over which he is said to have spent ten years. He was a Hellene rather than a mere Athenian, and thought that the only hope for Greece was that Athens and Sparta should forget their quarrels and unite against Persia. With him it became a fixed idea, that a united Greece should march against Asia. When he saw that Athens and Sparta would not combine, he addressed open letters, first (*circa* 368), to Dionysius,

The Panegyricus

[1] To have been a pupil of Isocrates gave a certain *cachet*; just so, many an English writer and statesman has been labeled "a pupil of Jowett." Cp. Cicero, *De Orat.* 2. 94. Ecce tibi exortus est Isocrates, cuius e ludo tamquam ex equo Trojano meri principes exierunt.

[2] I assume that the *Phaedrus* was written after the *Panegyricus* of Isocrates (380 B.C.), when Socrates had been dead some twenty years, and the vocation of Isocrates was no longer an open question.

the tyrant of Syracuse, and finally, in 346, to Philip of Macedon, whom he exhorted to reconcile the Greeks, so that he might lead them to this great enterprise. To Isocrates, Philip seemed no barbarian, but a worthy representative of the Hellenes, and under his presidency he imagined a sort of Utopia, the great cities of Greece sending embassies to share Philip's councils, and all Hellas animated by the single hope that no harm might befall this idealized personage before he had completed his great task.[1] It was the dream of an idealist, and if it has made Isocrates seem ridiculous to those who knew Philip better than he did, no one has ever doubted that he had the welfare of Athens at heart. But the true and typical patriot must be narrow in his views, jealous for his country's independence and supremacy at all costs. A Pan-Hellene at Athens could not expect to be called a patriot, and Isocrates must have encountered many disappointments and felt himself much misunderstood. Athens listened to Demosthenes and allied herself with Thebes against Philip. The defeat at Chaeronea in 338 secured the supremacy of Macedon. But Isocrates did not live to see how little Philip could realize his ideal of a united Greece. He died in the same year at the age of ninety-eight.[2]

We have twenty-one speeches and nine letters of Isocrates. Many more than these were current under his name, but it seems likely that we possess all but four of the compositions that the critic Dionysius regarded as genuine. Among the scholastic writings we have three 'Hortatory Essays': *To Demonicus*, a letter written, somewhat in the spirit of Lord Chesterfield, to a young

[1] *Letter to Philip* 68 ff.

[2] Dionysius of Halicarnassus preserved a tradition that Isocrates would not consent to survive the defeat of Athens at Chaeronea, and Milton's *Sonnet to the Lady Margaret Ley* has fixed in the minds of English readers the legend that the "dishonest victory" at Chaeronea, fatal to liberty, "kill'd with report that old man eloquent." But what was a crushing disappointment to Demosthenes and the anti-Macedonian party would have another side for Isocrates, and for a man of his age one need not ask for other than natural causes of death.

aristocrat, possibly of Cyprus; *To Nicocles* and the *Nicocles*, both composed for the ruler of Cyprian Salamis (*circa* 372), who may have been a pupil of Isocrates. The *Busiris* was written about 390. It was a favorite exercise of the sophists to write what they called 'recreations,' panegyrics of things and people whose bad reputation made it difficult and paradoxical to praise them. Such a *tour de force* had been achieved by one Polycrates, a panegyric of Busiris, the inhospitable king of Egypt, whom Heracles slew. Isocrates writes what is really a slashing review of this work, showing how much better the whitewashing could have been done, and at the same time criticises another composition by Polycrates, in which he had attacked Socrates. When he wrote his *Praise of Helen*, Isocrates seems to have had his eye on the *Helen* ascribed to his master Gorgias, since he is careful to take different ground, and condemns just the sort of faint praise, really amounting to an apology rather than a panegyric, that we find in the earlier piece. The *Evagoras* is a sincere panegyric of the murdered king of Cyprus, composed about 365.

The Busiris

Of all the epideictic compositions, the finest is the *Panathenaicus*, written in 342, when the "old man eloquent" had reached the age of ninety-four. It was not published till 339, and is thus the latest of his works. It contains the praise of Athens and a lengthy comparison of her achievements with those of Sparta. It is highly personal, and its garrulity, especially toward the close, betrays the writer's age and the vanity that had grown with years. He lets us into the secrets of his school methods by describing how he had revised this speech with three or four of his pupils; how, in order to secure the criticism of a specialist, he had called in a politician who had leanings to Sparta, had silenced this critic, and sent him away a wiser and humbler man. Even then he had called a council of his friends to decide whether he had better burn the essay, and, now, in his ninety-seventh year, he was only publishing it under pressure. All this is foreign to one's ideas of literary art, but it is

The Panathenaicus

illuminating for the personality and methods of Isocrates, whom we see working, like one of the great Italian masters, among his pupils, and providing for their imitation his own model compositions.

With this group of scholastic writings we may reckon the speeches *Against the Sophists* and the *Antidosis*. Isocrates was curiously isolated. Though he had been the friend and admirer of Socrates, he could not be counted with the Socratics; and, for all his interest in politics, he had to stand aside from the dust and heat of the political race. Much as he disliked the legal profession that he had abandoned, he was still more anxious not to be identified with the crowd of sophists, 'my enemies who make their living by plagiarizing me.'[1] We do not know the precise date of his manifesto against the sophists, but it was probably written about 391, at the opening of his career as a teacher, and was designed to separate him publicly from them and their ways. Unlike them, he insists on the need of special endowment, on the power of imagination and intuition that no mastery of rhetoric can teach; he ridicules the practice of teaching set passages, the commonplaces that were part of the outfit of the rhetorician.

Against the Sophists

But he was, of course, in the Athenian sense of the word, a sophist, a professional teacher, no less than Protagoras had been, and in the *Antidosis* (354 B.C.) he accepts the title. This, the longest of his speeches, which might well be called *On Myself*, was composed after he had been compelled by the courts to undertake a public service, a trierarchy, as befitted one of the wealthier citizens. It is a fictitious speech, partly a forensic defense against the citizen who had challenged him, according to the Athenian custom, to accept the service or exchange properties; partly it is an autobiography, the apology of a veteran of eighty-two for his career as a rhetorician, and for his theory of culture, which he supports by quoting long extracts from his own works.

The Antidosis

[1] *Panath.* 16.

We have a few fragments of the *Art of Rhetoric* of Isocrates, unless, indeed, it be safer to regard them as echoes of his lectures preserved in the quotations of later writers. In them we find the rule for the avoidance of hiatus, and the precept that prose should be rhythmical but not metrical. A passion for form dominated Isocrates: 'If an idea has been expressed before, one should try to say the same thing again, and better.'[1] Though he had been a pupil of Gorgias, he did not admit into his own prose the ornaments of poetic diction, and has few metaphors. He brought the period to perfection, paying out every member like the long link of a long and flawless chain, a chain that returns on itself after a wide circle.[2] A writer who delighted in showing what could be done with the truly subordinate style, incurred the danger of not knowing where to stop. But though sentences so long as his have seldom been written, long sentences have at least never been more lucid. It was not surprising that, as soon as prose writing had become a perfectly self-conscious art, it should take over from poetry the rule that two vowels that belong to independent words must not meet. Isocrates was the most rigid of his contemporaries in this avoidance of hiatus, so that the canon is always associated with his name. It is too much the fashion to disparage his passionless perfection by comparing him with Demosthenes, the truth being that they belong to separate categories. Isocrates is to be judged for what he was, the finished type of the epideictic rhetorician, with whom perfection of form is the first thought. After him the decline of rhetoric was swift and steady. He is emphatically a man of the fourth century. But his life covers nearly the whole of the hundred years that separate the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war, when Pericles was the soul of Athens, from the defeat at Chaeronea which made certain the ascendency of Macedon. "Athens," says Gibbon, "condensed within the period of a single life the genius of ages and millions."

Style

[1] *Panegyr.* 8.

[2] Cicero's style is based on that of Isocrates, so that the latter may be said to have influenced, through Cicero, the prose of modern Europe.

On which De Quincey observes[1] that "the condensation is the measure of the dignity; and Isocrates, as the single life alluded to, is the measure of the condensation," and goes on to compare him and his long life with the cylinder of a dumb-bell, whose two globes are in this case "the oasis of Pericles and the oasis of Alexander."

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CHAPTER XVIII

THE FOURTH-CENTURY ORATORS: DEMOSTHENES

DEMOSTHENES, the son of Demosthenes of the deme Paeania, was born in 384 B.C. His father, who died when the son was seven years old, belonged to the wealthy Athenian middle class. The orator's grandmother on the mother's side had been a native of Scythia, and we may note, as an instance of the absurd personalities that Athenian etiquette allowed a speaker to drag into his argument, the reproach of the opponents of Demosthenes that he was not a full-blooded Athenian. By his father's will he was to inherit a sufficient fortune, but when he came of age he found that his three guardians, Aphobus, Demophon, and Therippides, had employed the ten years of his minority in appropriating his estate. He was, apparently, a delicate and timid youth, brought up in seclusion by his mother, the easy prey of unscrupulous trustees. But the indomitable will that was destined to wield the fierce democracy of Athens set itself, even now, to fight what seemed a hopeless case. The next three years were devoted to a training that was made the more arduous by certain natural infirmities of voice and bearing, and in 363 he brought his suit and delivered his speech *Against Aphobus*. Aphobus prolonged the contest by various devices to retain his plunder, so that three speeches against his guardian and two against his confederate, Onetor, were delivered by Demosthenes before he could feel that the moral victory, at least, was complete, though little enough of his fortune was left to be restored. He was now free to adopt the profession of speechwright, which he never altogether abandoned.

Life

Of thirty-three *Private Orations* that survive under his name, only about fourteen are accepted by all the modern critics. All are of value for the history of Athenian law, finance, and the private life of the fourth century. But Demosthenes was not at his best in private suits. His heart was in politics, and his finest speeches in the courts were delivered in political trials. There could be no better exercise for one who aspired to be a statesman than the writing of such speeches as that *Against Androtion* (355 B.C.), composed for one Diodorus who accused Androtion of having moved an illegal resolution. In the *Against Timocrates* (352), the same client pursues his attack on Androtion by persecuting one of his supporters. The speech *Against Aristocrates* was written in 352 for Euthycles, a client who opposed a motion to give extraordinary power and immunity to Charidemus, the Euboean mercenary adventurer, who had married the sister of Cersobleptes, king of Thrace, and later (349) was destined to change sides once more and appear as an Athenian commander. The policy of Demosthenes himself is hardly to be judged from these professional speeches, though they probably express his genuine convictions.

Private Orations

The most brilliant and effective of this group is the speech *Against Leptines* (355). Demosthenes now for the first time appears in court to speak in person on a question of politics. On this occasion his task was that of a barrister, since he spoke on behalf of the family of an Athenian whose death had hindered his indictment of Leptines. Athens was in financial difficulties after her unsuccessful attempt to punish her revolted allies, Chios, Cos, and Rhodes. To meet this emergency, and to relieve those who were liable to excessive public services, such as the trierarchy, Leptines, in the previous year, had proposed to abolish the hereditary immunities from this sort of taxation. Of all the benefactors of Athens only the descendants of Harmodius and Aristogeiton were to retain their privileges. To Demosthenes, this repudiation of what he regarded as a state contract was odious, a blow to the credit of a city that had been peculiarly

Against Leptines

scrupulous in paying its debts. He reviews, almost in the manner of an epideictic panegyric, certain individual cases in which such a withdrawal of well-earned privileges would be especially injurious and unjust, and reminds the Athenians that *Those who debase the currency you punish with death: it will be strange, indeed, if you listen to those who debase the whole commonwealth and make it untrustworthy* (§ 167). The empty treasury and private avarice spoke louder than the young orator, and it seems almost certain that the resolution of Leptines was allowed to stand.

In the same year (354), Demosthenes spoke before the Ecclesia *On the Symmories*, or *Navy Boards*. There are several picturesque anecdotes of his earlier failures to impress an audience with which an orator's delivery counted for so much; but this is his first political speech, unconnected with the law courts, of which we know anything. It contains proposals for the reform of the navy, which were not accepted by the Assembly. Sixteen years later, Demosthenes himself devised a more thorough and practical scheme. But the speech gave him an opportunity for advising Athens not to make an aggressive war against Persia; she must strengthen her resources to meet emergencies that the future was sure to bring, whether from the acts of the king of Persia or another. That the other would be Philip of Macedon, Demosthenes does not seem to have realized as yet, any more than the rest of Athens.

On the Symmories

In the next year (353) falls the second political harangue, *For the Megalopolitans*. Megalopolis, founded (*circa* 370) as the federal capital of the Pan-Arcadian union, was threatened by her neighbor Sparta, naturally jealous of the Arcadian league. Eubulus, the statesman whose cautious policy was now predominant at Athens, was opposed to sending help to Megalopolis. The position of Demosthenes, at this time, was that of a fiery young orator who was always in the opposition. He urged Athens to support Megalopolis, to overlook the fact that she was the ally of the hated Thebans, to preserve the balance of

For the Megalopolitans

power, and check the aggressions of Sparta. The Athenians, however, decided to stand by the foreign policy of Eubulus, and not to interfere in the Peloponnesus.

In the same year[1] (353), the democrats of Rhodes appealed to Athens for aid against the Carian queen Artemisia who was carrying on the policy of her dead husband Mausolus by supporting the oligarchical party in the island. Rhodes had led the secession of the allies against Athens in 357, and had no right to look to her for help. But Demosthenes, in his speech *For the Rhodians*, argued that it was the sacred duty of Athens, continually threatened as she was from within by the terrors of oligarchy, to support democracy in every quarter. The cause, however, like that of Megalopolis, was too unpopular, and the island was left in the clutches of Caria.

For the Rhodians

So far Demosthenes had devoted himself to home affairs, or to the expression, usually ineffectual, of a foreign policy that barely recognized Philip of Macedon. In 359 Philip had secured the throne, and at once entered on his policy of expansion. For his schemes of conquest he needed money, and he turned his eyes to the gold mines of Thrace that lay on his eastern border. To control these, he must first reduce the powerful neighboring town of Amphipolis, still an outpost of Athenian influence in Thrace, though the actual possession of the colony had been lost to Athens in the Peloponnesian war. In 357 Philip attacked the town, and the inhabitants applied to Athens for assistance. But they were thwarted by the diplomacy of Philip. He made a secret bargain with the Athenians that, in return for the free town of Pydna, which was to be restored to Macedon, he would take Amphipolis, only to give it back to Athens, the rightful owner. When once Amphipolis had fallen, Philip kept it for himself and lost no time in taking Pydna as well. Potidaea, another Athenian outpost, he made over to the Olynthians, whom he

The policy of Philip

[1] This date is made almost certain by the arguments of Judeich, *Kleinasiatische Studien* 186 ff. The later date, 351, is given by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who is followed by Blass.

was not yet ready to absorb. In 353 he captured Methone, the last ally left to the Athenians on the Thermaic Gulf. By the end of 352 he was master of the northern Aegean, and his fleet was able to annoy the allies and to threaten Athenian trade. One single check he had received from Athens: when he had interfered in the holy war and defeated the Phocian army, in 352, he made ready to march south and enter Greece by the pass of Thermopylae; but Eubulus sent a strong force to Thermopylae, and Philip fell back, to turn his attention to the conquest of the Thracian Chersonese.

Such was the position to which Macedonia had attained when Demosthenes spoke his *First Philippic*. It is the most eloquent and most effective of the series of attacks that he was now to make on the indifferentism of the Athenians, their improvidence, their weakness in allowing Philip to outwit them in every encounter. He advised, as usual, what he thought 'best, but not easiest.' There must be a greater proportion of citizens in the army, and, above all, the generals must be Athenians. Every citizen must determine to take a lesson from the energy and personal devotion of Philip. So far the Athenians have been content with languid gossip: *Is there any news? you ask. Why, what news could be more startling than this, that a mere Macedonian is defeating the Athenians and managing the affairs of Greece? Is Philip dead? I ask. No, you answer, but he is ill. What difference does that make to you? Suppose he should die: you will soon create another Philip if you take no more interest in your affairs than you do now* (§§ 10–11). In this speech we see for the first time the impassioned eloquence of Demosthenes at its height. He is no longer merely an orator in the opposition, speaking against the peace policy of Eubulus as a matter of course, but a patriot who sees more clearly than the rest the insidious designs of Philip, and realizes that the greatest danger to Athens is her own apathy. But the Athenians whom he addressed were very different from the generation which, a century before, had been eager to risk everything for the glory of empire at the bidding of Pericles.

A vigorous and sustained foreign policy was impossible for that pleasure-loving, degenerate democracy. Only three years earlier, when Philip had appeared on the horizon, the Athenians had resolved to put their amusements first, by voting that the festival fund, which gave the citizens free admission to the festivals and theaters, must never be diverted to the purposes of war. The mere suggestion was to be accounted treason, and Demosthenes could offer no practical scheme for strengthening the army and navy while he respected the sanctity of the 'theoricon,' the theater fund. In 349 he delivered the three *Olynthiac Orations*, which are Philippics with a special reference to Olynthus. The Olynthians saw themselves cut off from the rest of Greece by the conquests of Macedonia, and more than once had appealed to Athens for support. In 349 Philip besieged some of the neighboring towns of Chalcidice, and Olynthus sent an embassy to Athens. The *First Olynthiac* urges the Athenians to lose no time in sending help to Olynthus. In the *Third Olynthiac* Demosthenes at last declares that the festival fund ought to be used for the war. The Athenians made an alliance with Olynthus and sent troops, but Philip created a diversion by inciting a revolt in Euboea. To put this down, Athens divided her forces, and in 348 Olynthus fell.

In the same year, Demosthenes, who had opposed the expedition to Euboea, wrote his speech *Against Meidias*. Meidias was a rich Athenian, an adherent of the peace party, who had long had a grudge against Demosthenes. At the feast of the Great Dionysia in this year, the orator was choregus for his tribe, and when he appeared in the theater, Meidias struck him in the face. The speech *Against Meidias* is a monument of personal invective, and contains a classic description of Athenian manners. But this was no time for private quarrels, and it is said that Demosthenes abandoned or compromised the suit. In 347 we find him acting with the peace party and sent with the orator Aeschines as an ambassador to Philip. His speech *On the Peace* followed in 346. In 344 he spoke the *Second Philippic*, pointing

Against Meidias

out Philip's sustained hostility to Athens, and in 343 the *On the False Embassy*, an unsuccessful impeachment of the orator Aeschines. In 341 he delivered two speeches, *On the Chersonese*, and the *Third Philippic*.[1]

In the eight years between the peace of Philocrates (346) and the battle of Chaeronea (338), Demosthenes was the soul of Athens. For the latter part of that period his foreign policy was hers, and when the peace with Philip was openly broken in 340, he even persuaded the citizens to devote the festival fund to the expenses of the war. Philip was, by this time, hopeless of securing the friendship of Athens. In 338, with the excuse of a second holy war, he entered Greece by Thermopylae, this time unmolested, and called on the Thebans to join him in an invasion of Attica. The news reached Athens that he had seized Elatea. Eight years later Demosthenes described the panic of the Athenians when the messenger arrived in the evening, the hurried clearing of the market place that the Assembly might meet at dawn, and how, next day, in the general terror, he alone stood up to give advice.[2]

That advice was an alliance with Thebes, and it was due to the diplomacy of Demosthenes that, at Chaeronea (338 B.C.), Philip had to face, not an isolated Athens, but Athens and Thebes together. But they had no competent generals to oppose to his strategy, and he won the battle. The Athenians were treated with the greatest consideration, and accepted his terms of peace. The Macedonian party was now predominant in Athens, but the hopes of Demosthenes and his intrigues were kept alive, first by the death of Philip in 336, and again by a false report of the death of Alexander. He took no pride, though a Greek well might, in the conquests of Alexander in the Far East;

Chaeronea, 338 B.C.

[1] Blass does not, with the majority of scholars, regard the *Fourth Philippic* as wholly the work of an imitator of Demosthenes. It is, he thinks, a compilation of genuine fragments, made, with additions of his own, by some fourth-century writer whose ambition was to compose a Demosthenic Philippic.

[2] *On the Crown* 218 ff.

he was the typical narrow patriot and could not envisage with the complacency of Isocrates a general expansion of Greece under the leadership of Macedon. The six years that followed Chaeronea were marked by only one oratorical triumph. This was in 330 when his old enemy Aeschines brought his long-delayed action against Ctesiphon, who, in 336, had proposed that Demosthenes should receive a golden crown for his services to Athens in that final crisis. The Macedonian party now seemed strong enough to crush Demosthenes, and Aeschines in his speech *Against Ctesiphon* tried to prove that his whole political career had been insincere and fatal to Athens. Demosthenes could have wished for no better opportunity to vindicate his policy. The speech *On the Crown* is the masterpiece of his oratory, a splendid epilogue to his political life. Aeschines won less than one fifth of the votes, and disappeared from Athens and from politics. Of Demosthenes we hear no more until 324 when the affair of Harpalus disgraced the close of his career.

Harpalus

Harpalus, the absconding treasurer of Alexander, arrived in Athens with 700 talents, hoping to induce the Athenians to support him against his master. This they refused to do, and he was lodged in the Acropolis in the charge of certain commissioners, of whom Demosthenes was one. Harpalus escaped, and half the money had disappeared. When the court of Areopagus investigated, they found Demosthenes guilty of receiving a bribe of twenty talents. Hypereides, a member of his own party, accused him publicly, and he was condemned to pay a heavy fine. In default of this he was imprisoned, but escaped and went into exile. That he took the money of Harpalus there is little doubt. Perhaps he thought that money stolen from Alexander might fairly be converted to Athenian use. But this was not the opinion of his judges, and that in a community whose standards of political morality were never impossibly high.

In 323 the hopes of Athens were revived by the death of Alexander, and Demosthenes was recalled. After some slight success, Athens and her allies were beaten at Crannon (322) by

the Macedonian general Antipater. He proved a harder master than Philip, and, among other humiliations, exacted from Athens the surrender of Demosthenes, Hypereides, and certain others of the anti-Macedonian agitators. Demosthenes fled to the temple of Poseidon on the island of Calauria. There he took poison rather than give himself up to the messengers of Antipater. Forty years later the Athenians set up his statue in bronze.

Crannon, 322 B.C.

When Longinus[1] sets out to praise Demosthenes, he begins by adding up the qualities in which his contemporary Hypereides surpassed him. He is flexible and Demosthenes is not; he, like Lysias, could merge his personality in his client's, while Demosthenes must always be himself; he is piquant, witty, charming, a master of the pathos that was so telling in epideictic eloquence; Demosthenes is none of these. But you may add up all these points of excellence, and still the greatness of Demosthenes is not to be shaken by arithmetic. For the very strength of his individuality which forbade him to be flippant, or fascinating, or histrionic, gave him the power to rise above himself and even what was mortal, and sweep away his hearers on the full tide of eloquence. He could not have written the short speech for Phryne the courtesan, which left not a dry eye among those who heard Hypereides, but he

Characteristics

> "Wielded at will that fierce democraty,
> Shook the arsenal, and fulmin'd over Greece."

When I read a speech of Isocrates, said Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *I become sober and calm . . . but when I take up a speech of Demosthenes, I am stirred to enthusiasm, moved hither and thither, and I share in all the emotions that sway the mind of man.*[2]

From the Greek critic, whose glory it is that he preferred the grand manner to the faultless, down to Milton, metaphors that express force and fire, that draw on the forces of nature, mighty rivers, sea tides, thunder and lightning and strong winds, have been

[1] *On the Sublime* 34.

[2] *On the Eloquence of Demosthenes* 22.

lavished on Demosthenes. One who read only these panegyrics might almost imagine him a rugged, untutored orator standing before the Assembly with awkward gestures, and astounding it, as Odysseus astounded the Trojans, with words that blinded and overwhelmed like a snowstorm in winter.[1] But he is, in fact, a fourth-century orator equipped with all the rhetorical arts of his time, as careful in his effects as the passionless Isocrates. About his actual training we know little, except that he did not attend the fashionable and expensive school of Isocrates,[2] but was probably taught informally by Isaeus, to whom he would naturally turn as an expert in a suit such as he intended to bring against his guardians. In certain of the earlier forensic speeches he has, in fact, plagiarized the commonplaces of Isaeus.[3] He was a close student of Thucydides, and in the speech *On the Symmories* and elsewhere there are clear echoes of the historian's difficult and elaborate style, with its condensed thought. Later, the influence of the smoother style of Isocrates can be detected. The oratory of Demosthenes is naturally raised to a higher pitch in the political harangues than in the forensic speeches. Such a speech as that *On the Crown* was carefully revised and polished between its delivery and its publication. In his choice of words Demosthenes was no purist like Isocrates or Lysias. He does not avoid colloquialisms and references to the most trivial things of ordinary life. He is fond of proverbs, and his speeches are made vivid with metaphors and roughened with oaths and ejaculations. You will never find an oath in Isocrates.

Style

Demosthenes was careful to avoid hiatus — the meeting of two vowels in consecutive words. Closely connected with this rule about hiatus is a question which, for the last quarter of a century, has agitated students of Demosthenes, and is likely to remain in

[1] *Il.* III 222.

[2] Gomperz maintains, against the generally received opinion, that Demosthenes was a pupil of Plato.

[3] Navarre, *La Rhétorique Grecque* 168 ff.

debate. This is his use of rhythm. Poetic prose has always been regarded by persons of taste as a weakness or a heresy. It is reckoned one of the "pleasant atrocities" of Tacitus that he begins his *Annals* with an unconscious hexameter.[1] Isocrates and the other writers on the technique of prose warned their students that there was a line which must not be crossed; rhythm they must use, but they must not degenerate into metrical prose. The difference between prose and verse rhythm lies in this, that the former, in the first place, has unlimited freedom to change the quality of the rhythmical effect, and, in the second place, the correspondence observed in prose is not between whole sentences, which would be the equivalent of the strophe or stanza in verse, but between clause and clause, what Cicero calls a *cantus obscurior*. Any comparison with verse must be inexact, but if one must liken the rhythmical prose of a writer like Demosthenes to a verse type, one might say that it is most nearly related to the strophe-less dithyramb or nome as we see it in the newly discovered *Persae* of Timotheus. That there is such a frequent and close correspondence of members or clauses of the periods of Demosthenes Blass has certainly shown.[2] But who shall decide whether it is due to that instinct for rhythm which was keener in the Greeks than in ourselves, or whether, as seems less likely, Demosthenes followed some rule that he had formulated and could have imparted to another?[3] That he avoided the accumulation of short syllables Blass has shown, but so do all who write in the grand manner.

Rhythms

In the most important rival of Demosthenes we have a man of a very different moral fiber. AESCHINES was born in 389 B.C., the

[1] Yet the most exalted English prose may fall naturally into a hexameter: "He poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty."

[2] *Attische Beredsamkeit* 98 ff., and see especially his later articles in *Neue Jahrb.*, 1902 and 1904.

[3] Sua sponte, etiamsi id non agas, cadunt plerumque numerose, says Cicero of Gorgianic prose. *Orator* § 175.

son of an obscure Athenian schoolmaster. His mother, if we are to take the word of Demosthenes, was an inferior priestess of certain rather shady rites, in which she was assisted by her son.

Aeschines

At any rate, Aeschines and his two brothers, who all raised themselves to state offices, were self-made men of the lower middle class. After following, without success, the profession of a provincial actor, Aeschines entered politics by a back door. Under the patronage of Eubulus he became clerk of the Assembly, whose business it was to read the decrees and keep the records. Later in life, he was ashamed of having held this insignificant office, but he was able to use it as a stepping-stone to positions of trust. He had a good presence, a fine voice, and a talent for extempore speaking, and he turned them all to good account. At the age of thirty-two (357 B.C.) he began his political career, but we have no record of a speech before 348, when he denounced Philip after the fall of Olynthus. In 347 he went on a minor embassy to the Arcadian assembly at Megalopolis; in 346 he was sent with Demosthenes and eight others to negotiate terms of peace with Philip; and he was a member of the second embassy sent to receive Philip's oath. From this time he appears as a supporter of Macedon, and as the owner of certain estates which we can only account for as presents from Philip. So at any rate Demosthenes accounted for them, and in 345 he prepared to impeach Aeschines as a traitor to Athens. A rich Athenian named Timarchus was to support the accusation. Aeschines forestalled the attack by prosecuting Timarchus under the old and neglected law of Solon which forbade the rights of citizens to those whose life was infamous. The speech *Against Timarchus*

Against Timarchus

(344), the first that Aeschines published, is the most scurrilous that has come down to us from the Athenian courts, where the rules of the game allowed personal abuse of a kind that to-day even the newspapers would suppress. Timarchus was convicted, and disappeared from public life. In 343 Demosthenes himself came forward to impeach Aeschines, who spoke in his defense the speech *On the False Embassy*. This was the

apologia for his political policy and is the best of his speeches. He was acquitted by thirty votes. In 340 he won a great oratorical triumph. The Locrians of Amphissa, seven miles from Delphi, had agreed with Thebes to wipe off the old score against Athens by accusing her in the Amphictyonic Council of sacrilege in connection with the dedication of certain shields which Athens had set up in the shrine, after Plataea. Aeschines, as an Athenian deputy, was at the council, and, being warned of the plot, had a sudden inspiration. More than two centuries earlier the plain of Crisa near the temple had been solemnly dedicated to Apollo, and curses laid on any who should cultivate it. But the Locrians had cultivated the plain, and Aeschines now made a sensational speech urging the council to punish the impious people of Amphissa: *I stood up and pointed out to the Amphictyons the plain which lies below the temple in full view. Amphictyons, I cried, you see that this plain has been cultivated by the Amphissians, that they have built potteries there, and stables. You see with your own eyes how the harbor that was devoted to the god and laid under a curse has been rebuilt. No one knows better than you how they exact port dues and make a revenue from that sacred harbor. . . . This I said, and much more to the same effect, and the Amphictyons shouted aloud. In the excitement there was not another word said about the shields that we had dedicated, but only about punishing the Amphissians.*[1] This once, then, Aeschines served Athens by averting from her an Amphictyonic war.

On the False Embassy

The speech *Against Ctesiphon*, in which Aeschines gives this vivid description, was spoken in 330, and was an attack on the political career of Demosthenes, in whose honor Ctesiphon had proposed a vote of a golden crown, to be bestowed in the theater. It is the longest of the three extant speeches. Aeschines argues that the proposal is illegal for more than one reason, and that, in any case, the honor is not deserved. The speech has always been overshadowed by the reply

Against Ctesiphon

[1] Aeschines, *Against Ctesiphon* 119 ff.

of Demosthenes, the splendid speech *On the Crown*,[1] but it has many effective passages. Such is that in which Aeschines reviews the grievances and mortifications of Greece. Thebes blotted out in a single day, Sparta ruined, and the Spartans bowed in the dust before Alexander. Last of all, Athens, once the refuge and shelter of all Greece, to whom every other state sent embassies, is fighting, not now for the leadership, but for her very soil. And all this since Demosthenes entered politics. He is like one of those dangerous men of whom Hesiod wrote in the *Works and Days*, who destroy a whole state by their baleful advice. Aeschines was fond of quoting the poets — it was not for nothing that he had been an actor and a schoolmaster's son — and he recited the verses from Hesiod to point his parallel. This was his last appearance in Athenian politics. He was fined a thousand drachmae for his failure to win one fifth of the votes, and withdrew to Rhodes, where it is said that, disappointed by Alexander's death of any hope of reinstatement at Athens, he spent the rest of his life in teaching.

The prominence of Aeschines is mainly due to his collisions with Demosthenes. Twice on his defense, the third time himself the aggressor, he summed up in the three speeches which are all that he published that short but bitter conflict of sixteen years between the friend and the enemy of Macedon. Inferior at all points to Demosthenes, he has certain characteristics that remind one of an orator of the earlier fifth-century group, Andocides. They both have the same slightly unprofessional air of men who had not from the first made oratory their single aim, and neither of them ever undertook speech writing for others. But Aeschines was the stronger man, and once he had entered politics he pur-

[1] Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists* 216, tells an anecdote of Aeschines at Rhodes. He had given a public reading of his speech *Against Ctesiphon*, whereupon the Rhodians expressed their surprise that so brilliant a speech was defeated, and their doubts of the sanity of the Athenian judges: *You would not wonder*, said Aeschines, *if you had heard Demosthenes make his speech in defense.*

sued his ambition with an energy and tenacity foreign to Andocides. He was proud of his power of improvisation, and his speeches wear the signs of it. No one could taunt him with the midnight oil and the marks of incubation which he ridiculed in Demosthenes, but he paid for this negligence by an occasional confusion of expression. He had a special gift for dramatic description, but in his narratives he never rises to the eloquence that Demosthenes could use in such passages as the famous description, in the speech *On the Crown*, of the coming to Athens of the messenger with the news of Philip's occupation of Elatea, and the night of panic that followed. But Aeschines was excellent in a malicious anecdote of the stage fright of Demosthenes before Philip, or of his own astuteness in turning the tables on the impertinent Locrians. The mark of the stage is on his vocabulary, which is full of poetic words and metaphors that the stricter orators had barred. He was far from rigid in avoiding hiatus, and in other respects, also, shows his independence of the conventions of the school of Isocrates. What really spoils all his eloquence is the fact that, though it takes the tone of patriotism and makes the usual pathetic apostrophes to a glorious past, it rings hollow because, however expedient at the time for Athens, his policy was simply expedient and no more. It is much easier to be truly moving when, like Demosthenes, the speaker puts forth all the eloquence of one who pleads a lost cause.

Style

Of the supporters of Demosthenes in the anti-Macedonian party, HYPEREIDES was the most important and the most eloquent. He was born about 389 B.C. of a prosperous middle-class family in the deme Collytus, Plato's deme, where oratory, according to the tradition, was in the air you breathed. He is said to have attended the school of Isocrates. In his private life he had the reputation of an epicure. The comic poets made jests about his fondness for gambling, his morning stroll in the fish market, his friendships with courtesans. He was one of Phryne's lovers, and when she was accused of impiety, made a celebrated speech in her defense. Nor was she the only woman of her class for

Hypereides

whom, following his profession of speechwright, he wrote speeches, none of which survive. His appearance in political trials dates from 360. In 343 he impeached Philocrates, who had arranged the peace with Philip and was the *bête noire* of the anti-Macedonian party. Shortly before Chaeronea Hypereides proposed that Demosthenes should be rewarded by a vote of a golden crown. In the panic after the battle he was one of the foremost to take measures for the safety of the city, and made certain illegal proposals, such as that the slaves should be freed. When he was formally accused on this score, he pleaded that the arms of Macedon had blinded his eyes to the laws, and the excuse was accepted. When Demosthenes took the money of Harpalus, Hypereides, his political adherent, was one of his accusers. The exile of Demosthenes placed him at the head of his party, and, on the death of Alexander (323), he was one of the most active in advising resistance to Antipater in what is called the Lamian war from the siege of the hill city, Lamia, near Thermopylae, by the Athenian general Leosthenes, in that winter. In the following year Hypereides was captured and put to death by the agents of Antipater.

A complete manuscript of Hypereides, with the scholia, which was known to exist in the library of the king of Hungary, was destroyed in the invasion of the Turks in 1526. From that date until the middle of the nineteenth century Hypereides was, like Bacchylides, a mere name, depending on the judgments of the Greek and Roman critics and the evidence of some insignificant fragments. But in 1847 and 1856 there were discovered in Egypt papyri containing four more or less complete speeches, that *Against Demosthenes* (in the affair of Harpalus), which is too much mutilated to be of great importance, the speeches *For Lycophron* and *For Euxenippus*, and the famous *Funeral Oration* spoken for those who fell in the Lamian war. In 1888 the Museum of the Louvre acquired a papyrus containing the speech *Against Athenogenes*. In 1890 the British Museum acquired the papyrus manuscript of the speech *Against Philippides* (*circa* 336) which was

delivered in a political trial against one of the pro-Macedonian party. So much, at least, the sands of Egypt have restored, and we have, besides, over sixty titles of speeches from which we may judge of the activity of Hypereides. The most interesting recoveries are the *Athenogenes* and the *Funeral Oration*, the latter because, though Hypereides was not an epideictic orator, this single speech had a great reputation in antiquity, and though we know so much from Thucydides, Plato, and Isocrates as to the general style and etiquette of Greek funeral speeches, this is the only surviving one of its kind that was actually delivered. The *Athenogenes* (*circa* 328) was mentioned with the *Phryne* by Longinus as peculiarly typical of the talents of Hypereides, who shone in a *cause célèbre* for which the grand style of Demosthenes would have been out of place. Much of the speech is lost or hard to decipher. Athenogenes was a wily Egyptian who sold perfumes in Athens. One of his slaves attracted the notice of a country gentleman, the client of Hypereides. Athenogenes consented to sell the slave, but advised the plaintiff, who was, as all Greek speechwrights say of their clients, 'inexperienced in affairs,' to take over, as well, the shop, the slaves, and the debts of the business, which, he said, were insignificant and covered by the stock. A beautiful courtesan named Antigone was employed by Athenogenes to persuade the victim to sign the contract, and she secured a slave girl as her share of the plunder. The plaintiff soon found himself liable for heavy debts incurred by Athenogenes. The law of contracts was against him, and he could only appeal to equity and the sympathy of the jury. The speech is full of spirit and humor, a picture of the shady side of the life of the Athenian middle class and *demi-monde*.

Hypereides had a great reputation as a speaker, and many of his imitators ranked him first as a model of the Attic manner. Cicero bracketed him with Demosthenes, and we have seen that when Longinus wished to emphasize the excellence of the latter, he allowed to Hypereides a list of charms whose sheer number Demosthenes could not rival. Brilliant, easy, and charming,

Hypereides lacked the grand style. Nor was he profoundly original, and it was easy for later critics to show that he had plagiarized passages from Demosthenes and did not scruple to borrow a striking commonplace from Isocrates.[1] He takes little pains to avoid hiatus, and it is only in the epideictic *Funeral Oration* that he is careful to use the figures of rhetoric that had been developed by Gorgias and his school; elsewhere he has less art than Lysias, and can hardly be classed with the Isocratic group of writers. The Rhodian school of rhetoric whose style was said to be the golden mean of Asianism and exaggerated Atticism took Hypereides for its model.

The Athenian orators of the generation of Demosthenes were drawn from the bourgeois class with one exception. This was Lycurgus, a genuine aristocrat, whose family held a hereditary priesthood and had been distinguished for its public services among the richest citizens of Athens. Lycurgus was born about 390 B.C., and his life runs parallel with that of Demosthenes, to whose party he belonged. Isocrates has the credit of his education, and, like many of the pupils of that famous school, he turned to the career of a man of action. In 338 he succeeded Eubulus as minister of finance and public works, holding the office for twelve years. He was one of the most useful of all Athenian statesmen, and under his administration Athens increased her navy and restored her finances. Next to Pericles he did most to beautify Athens, built the Panathenaic stadium on the Ilissus, and rebuilt the Lycean gymnasium. His name is forever associated with the theater of Dionysus which he completed and adorned with the marble thrones that still survive, and the stage buildings still to be discerned among the later additions.[2] To one so deeply religious and conservative these public acts seemed a pious duty, and it was in the same spirit that he ordered that the state should provide authorized texts of the three great Athenian dramatists, which the

Lycurgus

[1] Cp. *Funeral Oration* 13 with *Isocr. Evagoras* 65.

[2] Dörpfeld, *Das Griechische Theater* 36 ff.

actors of their plays were in future bound to observe. This official copy was secured for the Alexandrian Library by the sharp practice of Ptolemy Euergetes, who forfeited a large deposit rather than return it to Athens.

In Athens the life of Lycurgus was quoted as a model of asceticism. He carried his austerity into his public life, and prosecuted with unrelenting bitterness any citizen who fell short of his ideal. Like other idealists who desired to make over the Athenian character, he admired the methods of Sparta and would have liked to import them into Athens. If he had lived so long, he would, no doubt, have shared the fate of Demosthenes and Hypereides at the hands of Antipater, but he died in 324, about the time of the affair of Harpalus. Of fifteen speeches ascribed to him, nearly all delivered after 338, only one survives, that *Against Leocrates* (330). It is marked by the energy and bitterness that made him the terror of all who had failed in their duty to Athens. Leocrates was an Athenian who, after the battle of Chaeronea, had turned his back on the desperate fortunes of his country and fled to Rhodes. After six years he ventured to return and was promptly impeached by the vigilant Lycurgus. In the name of patriotism he demanded the death of Leocrates, a severe penalty for an act of cowardice, not in the field of war, and already expiated by six years of exile. But the Athenians were slow to forgive, and, the votes being even, Leocrates barely escaped with his life. In this short speech Lycurgus quotes fifty-five verses from the lost *Erechtheus* of Euripides, several lines of Homer, three or four passages from poets who cannot be identified,[1] and, most valuable of all to the modern reader, thirty-two elegiacs of Tyrtaeus in praise of the patriot. It may be seen that Lycurgus had a decided leaning to the epideictic style. The *Leocrates* is a *locus classicus* on Greek patriotism, and differs in other respects from the regular

Against Leocrates

[1] Among these, in § 92, is a Greek version of the saying, Quem deus vult perdere dementat prius, perhaps the most famous and most debated quotation that exists.

forensic speech. The tone is thoroughly gnomic, and Lycurgus dwells on the general aspects of the case, not condescending to touch on the private life of Leocrates. His style, which was dignified and dry, often reflects the influence of Isocrates. He lacked the flexibility of Hypereides, and was no purist in his use of words, so that he does not rank with the best models of Attic eloquence.

Deinarchus

The last in the canon of ten orators, and last in merit, was a metic, disqualified for political life. DEINARCHUS was born at Corinth about 360 B.C. He settled in Athens as a speechwright and gained a considerable reputation. His chief activity falls in the years 322–307, when the oligarchs with whom he sympathized were in the ascendant in Athens. When the democrats returned to power in 307, he withdrew to Chalcis. Dionysius devoted a separate treatise to Deinarchus, but rather in order to distinguish the genuine from the spurious speeches out of about one hundred attributed to him, than by way of paying him a special compliment. Of the sixty speeches that he allowed to be genuine, only three are extant, together with a long list of titles. *Against Demosthenes*, *Against Aristogeiton*, and *Against Philocles* were all written for clients and all connected with the affair of Harpalus. Deinarchus was an industrious imitator. He echoes all the greater Attic orators, but especially Demosthenes. His speeches are perhaps the least important surviving specimens of Athenian eloquence, and his place in the canon is a tribute to his industry and his professional success, acquired, however, at a time when all his greater competitors had been removed.

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CHAPTER XIX

SOCRATES AND THE LESSER SOCRATICS

Socrates, son of the sculptor Sophroniscus, was born about 469 B.C. He grew up in the Athens of Pericles, the 'school of Hellas' where the laws secured even to one of his humble origin a training in music and gymnastic. His education falls a full generation before the coming to Athens of the sophists and the new ideals of teaching, but he cannot have been ignorant of the doctrines of the Ionian philosophers, and Anaxagoras, then resident in Athens, could not fail to influence his mind. He seems to have followed, for a time, his father's craft, but abandoned it to devote himself to the life of a reformer. He must have been fairly launched in his vocation as a teacher, and known beyond Athens, before his admirer, Chaerephon, brought back from Delphi the remarkable response that there was no wiser man than Socrates. What was the motive of such a statement has never been explained. The effect of the oracle was to strengthen his sense of responsibility. He interpreted it to mean that he alone knew his own ignorance and pursued with the greater energy his task of convincing other men of theirs.

But besides the message from Delphi, which he was far too pious to question, he had other and peculiar grounds for self-confidence. From childhood throughout his life he received on occasion a sudden intimation as to his actions, a warning voice heard from within. This he interpreted as a divine sign (τὸ δαιμόνιον). Other men must seek oracles, but he had only to await and obey the clear command of a divine critic. So at least he believed, whether because of a vein of mysticism which came to the surface only here in the life of this clear-headed thinker, or because his piety refused to allow him the credit of his wise and quickly

formed decisions. Plato and Xenophon vary in their precise conception of the functions of the 'divine sign,' but both make Socrates speak plainly more than once of this strange gift.[1] Not invariably however was he to be restrained from the inexpedient. Late in life he married Xanthippe, who, whether justly or not, has passed into a proverb as a scold, the whetstone of his philosophy.[2]

In 424 Aristophanes brought out the *Clouds*, a satire on the new education and the methods of the sophists. In that play he ridicules Socrates as one of the most conspicuous in the new movement which he detested. For another twenty-five years after the *Clouds* Socrates carried on his teaching, for which, unlike the rest of the sophists, he took no fees. His interests, except for occasional military duties, were limited to the streets of Athens, where his grotesque features, as of a Silenus, his uncouth gait, his self-confidence and air of a fanatic, were familiar to all. At first he was, no doubt, tolerated as an oddity, but he came to be an annoyance, regarded with jealous and irritated eyes by the majority who, like Aristophanes, were too conservative not to hate his attitude. He was different from all others, and to be different is to be disliked. Heracleitus had been in his way a fanatic, hostile to the ideals of his age, but he had withdrawn from observation, and in any case Ionia was always more indulgent than Athens to independent thought. Socrates was an aggressive eccentric. a born missionary. His mission was nothing less than to educate the higher classes, to whom alone he addressed himself, into the conviction that they were less qualified for government, as regarded expert knowledge, than the very cobblers and artisans of the city. Few persons beyond their first youth enjoy being en-

[1] The more important references to the divine sign are Plato, *Apology* 31 C–D; *Euthydemus* 272 E; *Phaedrus* 242 B; Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1. 1. 2; 4. 8. 1; *Symposium* 8. 5.

[2] For a thorough and sympathetic sifting of the charges against Xanthippe, see the not wholly serious essays of Zeller, *Zur Ehrenrettung der Xanthippe* in his *Vorträge*, Leipzig, 1865; and Gildersleeve, *Xanthippe and Socrates* in *Essays and Studies*, Baltimore, 1890.

lightened, and Socrates was certain to antagonize the older members of Athenian society. To them he seemed, as indeed he was, an individualist who, standing aloof from the political interests of the state, neither served it himself nor educated those who did; who despised, or set his face against, the whole range of Hellenic culture in which the Athenians took a peculiar pride; a cosmopolitan, which, to the average Greek, with his intense local patriotism, was almost the same thing as a traitor to one's state; finally, he was a friend of oligarchy, that nightmare of the Athenian crowd. All this might have been ignored as mere eccentricity; what could not be forgiven was his success with the younger generation, always eager for an enlightenment. Youths of all classes followed his steps, caught fire from his enthusiasm for knowledge, and delighted in his refutation of popular notions. His enemies had to see him influencing men of all temperaments, the gentle and heroic Theaetetus, the simple and honest Crito, the emotional Apollodorus, Critias who was to prove the most hateful of the Thirty Tyrants,[1] the gay and brilliant Alcibiades who was to avenge himself on the democrats for his exile by betraying Athens to Sparta, Plato the visionary aristocrat, Xenophon the soldier of fortune with his slack notions of the duties of an Athenian. It was not till after the fall of the oligarchs that the Athenian democrats decided that they could now silence Socrates. Anytus, a politician who had been prominent in restoring the democracy, brought the accusation: *Socrates is guilty of crime because he does not believe in the gods whom the city worships, but introduces new and strange deities; moreover he corrupts the youth.* Socrates refused to conciliate his judges or to withdraw from Athens. He was condemned to death, and a month later drank the hemlock (399 B.C.).

Of all teachers who, writing nothing themselves, depend on the

[1] The literary activity of Critias has been overshadowed by his notoriety as a fierce oligarch. He wrote poetry and prose. We have fragments of political elegies; of two dramas, decidedly Euripidean in their reflective and speculative character; and a few short fragments of his *Constitutions*, a type of history which he was one of the first to write.

testimony of disciples, Socrates is, with the exception of Christ, the most important. We have now to consider his positive contribution to the history of thought and morals. He is, in the first place, the

Socratic ethics

founder of utilitarian ethics. Moderation, that eminently Greek virtue, self-control, self-knowledge, were, in his philosophy of life, the essential virtues, and were to be pursued on the ground of their practical utility to man considered as a citizen. Before Socrates, morality had been taught by the gnomic poets, and in his own generation we find it a by-product of sophistic, especially in the teaching of Prodicus. But Socrates, with a deeper and more specialized purpose than any of these, bent all his power of argument to the development of character. His thesis, or rather axiom, since he never questioned its truth and was content to hang on it his whole ethical argument, was that 'Virtue is Knowledge,' that is to say, in Plato's phrase, 'No one of his own will does wrong.' All his dialectic was bent toward clearing up in the mind of every man with whom he came in contact that man's ideas about the facts of everyday experience, politics, education, and conduct. He saw on all sides the greatest confusion in the minds of educated men when called on to define and distinguish the principles of their own actions. He wished to replace the life of instinct, which the Greeks accepted as law, by the life of reason. So it was that he went about demanding definitions, persuaded that, all error being intellectual, men could be reasoned into virtue. If he could have heard Ovid's Medea lamenting that though she saw the better way she must follow the worse, he would have retorted that she only thought she saw, — that her misconduct was due to intellectual confusion. But it is not so much this assumption as his actual dialectical method that places Socrates among the most original thinkers. The rhetoric

Socratic dialectic

of the sophists he set on one side as misleading and unsound, careless of truth. *Two things*, said Aristotle, *we may with justice ascribe to Socrates, inductive reasoning and the fixing of general concepts.*[1] It was, of course, by the

[1] *Metaphysics* 13, p. 1078.

inductive reasoning that he arrived at the concepts. His aim was not to obtain a general rule, but to define ideas, such as justice, injustice, piety, democracy, and the like. This was his contribution to the art of logical discussion. His teaching always took the form of cross-examination, and since he inspired Plato to use the dialogue form, we may regard him as the father of the literary dialogue. For his habits and discussions we depend on the reports of Xenophon and Plato, for when we come to Aristotle there is always the risk that he is reflecting the Platonic Socrates rather than the Socrates who walked the streets of Athens. Plato was not the man to reproduce the opinions of others without to some extent re-creating them in his own mind. But if we turn to Xenophon as a reporter of less imagination, we must remember that in reporting much depends on the ability to select. Xenophon was little qualified to appreciate Socrates on the side of his philosophy. It is only when he has exhausted more trivial matter that he turns at the end of the *Memorabilia* to describe the Socratic method of dialectic, and he remarks that it would be a long business to give all the Socratic definitions.[1] No absolute choice is possible between the idealized Socrates of the Platonic dialogues and the Socrates who was envisaged by the rather commonplace mind of Xenophon. But it is the Platonic Socrates, with his serenity, his invincible dialectic, his irony, and humor that dominates the imagination of every reader. Men will always prefer to think that he discoursed on love as Plato makes him discourse in the *Symposium*, proved a match for the brilliant Protagoras as in the dialogue of that name, and died with the calm and unaffected heroism that he displays in the immortal death scene of the *Phaedo, — le drame du sage.*

Socrates bequeathed to his followers a method and an attitude, but no positive doctrines. There had been nothing esoteric in his teaching. The several schools of philosophy that looked to him as their founder were widely divergent in their doctrines and their conceptions of the 'end' or aim of existence. But they all derived

[1] 4. 6. 1.

their ethics from Socrates, and were nearly all alike in this, that they taught the necessity of setting up some standard and living by it. EUCLEIDES of Megara was one of the closest of his disciples. It is said that, in spite of the exclusion of Megarians from Attic soil (by the decree of 432 B.C.), he would slip into Athens under cover of night in order to converse with his master. He founded the critical school of the Megarians who have been called the Neo-Eleatics because they blent the Socratic doctrine that Virtue is One with the teaching of the Eleatics that Being is One. Thus we find the Megarians displaying the tendency of the Socratic schools to absorb the physical speculations of the pre-Socratic philosophers. From the Eleatics the Megarians took over the dialectic of Zeno, and became noted for their eristic, their mania for exposing fallacies, "a race of logical martinets."

Eucleides

Practical ethics were neglected by the school of Megara, but the Cynics clung to the Socratic tradition. Their founder was the son of an Athenian father and a Thracian slave, ANTISTHENES, who plays a conspicuous part in the *Symposium* of Xenophon (422 B.C.). Plato sneers at him as a 'late learner' because he was no longer young when he forsook rhetoric to join the Socratic circle. He taught in the gymnasium outside Athens called the Cynosarges, which was reserved for half-breeds like himself, and it was perhaps from this fact that his followers were called Cynics. He had been a pupil of Gorgias, closely in touch with sophistic influences, and, like many of the sophists, wrote commentaries on the poets. The eccentricities of Diogenes of Sinope (412–323 B.C.) have hrown into the shade the personality of Antisthenes. But he was an industrious writer, much read in Athens. We have a few fragments of his philosophic writings, which were chiefly dialogues, written in Attic whose purity was praised by Dionysius of Halicarnassus.[1] The

Antisthenes

[1] Blass, against the judgment of the majority of scholars, defends as authentic two speeches that survive under the name of Antisthenes. They are sophistic exercises, imaginary arguments of Ajax and Odysseus on the award of the arms of Achilles.

main characteristics of the Cynic school, its insistence on self-dependence, on virtue as the only good, on a return to nature, its adoption of Heracles as a patron saint, may all be traced to Antisthenes.

The contribution of the other Cynics to literature was slight. In the beginning of the third century B.C. Bion of Borysthenes, who later joined the Cyrenaics, wrote, in the form of conversations, satires that Horace tells us were both coarse and witty.[1] They are almost entirely lost. Menippus of Gadara, about the same time, wrote satiric miscellanies in verse varied with prose. These achieved a wide popularity, and in the following century were imitated in a work that was no less famous, the *Menippean Satires* of the Roman writer Varro.

Menippus

From Cyrene, the brilliant Greek colony on the African coast which was to be forever identified with the philosophy of pleasure, came another, and no less celebrated, pupil of Socrates, ARISTIPPUS, the first of the Cyrenaics. Cyrene had, so far, produced only one writer of any note, Eugammon, who wrote the *Telegonia* to close the ring of the Trojan epics, though later it was to boast of the poet Callimachus, the learned Eratosthenes, and Carneades, the founder of the New Academy. The Cynics taught men to renounce, to be indifferent to the ordinary desires. The ideal of Aristippus was very different. He was a man of the world, to whom, as Horace said, every form of life, every condition, every circumstance was becoming.[2] He derived from Socrates his interest in ethics, but for the Socratic dialectic he cared no more than the Cynics. He loved all the amenities of life. Happiness was the 'end' of his philosophy, and in its pursuit he was eager to leave no experience, no sensation, untried. This first of all the hedonists held that pleasure is always a good, and that to know how to select one's pleasures and to subordinate them to one's reason is to have mastered the art of life. He agreed with Protagoras that beyond his own sensations man can know nothing, and thought all other researches

Aristippus

[1] *Epistles* 2. 2. 60.

[2] *Epistles* 1. 17. 23.

waste of time. The daughter of Aristippus succeeded him in his school, a unique instance of a woman carrying on a philosophic tradition. Aristippus wrote a history of Libya, and a number of philosophic dialogues, partly in Attic, partly in the Dorian dialect of Cyrene, but of all this not a genuine line remains. So far, indeed, the Socratics have had little significance for literature. For the literary development of the teachings of Socrates we must turn to Plato.

Megarian Socratism gradually died out. The Cynics existed for several centuries as the exponents of a certain unconventional manner of life, but their importance as philosophers was overshadowed by the Stoic school, founded in the first half of the third century B.C. by Zeno, himself a pupil of the most famous of the Megarians, Stilpo.

Zeno

ZENO was Semitic by descent, a native of Citium, a Phoenician colony in Cyprus. He was about twenty-two when he settled in Athens, and there, after many years of study, he began to lecture in the Painted Porch (Stoa) to his disciples, called Stoics from the place where they foregathered. We have only fragments of his works, which were both philosophical, expounding his system, and critical, on the poets. On his death (*circa* 260 B.C.) he was succeeded by his disciple CLEANTHES of Assos (331–232 B.C.). Though he wrote logical and scientific works, among the latter a treatise on Heracleitus whose doctrine formed the scientific basis of Stoic ethics, the strength of Cleanthes did not lie in original speculation.[1] With his pupil CHRYSIPPUS of Soli (280–206 B.C.), who succeeded him, the school may be said to have been founded again. In learning and logic none of the earlier Stoics is his equal, and he expanded and completed the Stoic doctrine. Virtue is the highest good, the 'end' of the Stoics, and the study of logic and of the laws of nature, which they thought indispensable, were all directed to the attainment of virtue. Their ideal wise man is wholly detached from material

Cleanthes

Chrysippus

[1] For the *Hymn* of Cleanthes see *infra*, Chapter XXIII.

things. The earlier Stoics paid little attention to style, and though theirs is peculiarly an Athenian philosophy, founded and taught at Athens, their prose and their manner of thought was influenced by their alien descent.

The School of Epicurus (342–270 B.C.) in its turn supplanted Cyrenaicism, from which it was derived. So it was that from the informal school of Socrates descended those four tendencies or ways of looking at life, which are known as the Skeptic, the Cyrenaic, the Stoic, and the Epicurean. Epicurus, though born in Samos, was of Athenian parentage. In his famous Garden at Athens he taught that 'happiness' was the end to be pursued. This was of course something very different from the vulgar ideal of 'the pleasure of the moment' recommended by the Cyrenaics. Happiness, according to Epicurus, consists in following a simple life, choosing one's pleasures with prudence. So one comes to enjoy content of mind and body. The refinement of his personal interpretation must often have been exchanged by Epicureans for the pursuit of sensual pleasures. The fault lies with the chooser. For the ideal Epicurean, as Epicurus envisaged him, though he does not scorn the pleasures of the senses, and makes sense-perception the criterion of truth, compares well with the impossibly remote and austere sage set up as the Stoic pattern. The Epicurean philosophy, like the Stoic, was practical rather than speculative, and since the business of securing a happy life appeals to nearly all, his teaching had a wide popularity and was maintained without any notable heresies for seven centuries. Epicurus asserted that a knowledge of logic and the physical sciences is necessary in order to rid one's self of superstition, that bar to happiness. In 1752 were discovered in a villa at Herculaneum fragments of his work *On Nature*. For the rest we depend, for an account of his teaching, mainly on the quotations of his biographer Diogenes Laertius, who has also preserved his Will and an epitome of his philosophy. Epicurus, like Chrysippus, was an industrious writer, but wholly indifferent to style.

Epicurus

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CHAPTER XX

PLATO

PLATO, the son of Ariston, was born in 428 or 427 B.C., soon after the death of Pericles, so that his youth coincides with the gradual decline of the fortunes of Athens. He was a thorough aristocrat, claiming on his father's side descent from the Athenian royal house of Codrus, and on his mother's from Solon. Critias and Charmides, the oligarchs, who had been pupils of Socrates, were his kinsmen. When Plato was twenty-four, he witnessed their fall and the restoration of the democracy (403). Some years before that, he had burnt his youthful poems and joined the circle of Socrates, determined to dedicate himself to philosophy. So far as he was a politician, he was anti-democratic, following the tradition of his house. A thorough Athenian education may, in his case, be taken for granted. Apart from certain essays in poetry, not to be omitted by an imaginative youth, philosophy was his first love. By Cratylus, a 'flowing philosopher' more Heracleitean than Heracleitus, he was taught the philosophy of flux, that most fascinating of all doctrines to the imagination. The two great Eleatics, Parmenides and Zeno, had visited Athens within the memory of Socrates, and with their philosophy of perpetual rest, and the Zenonian dialectic, Plato was familiar.[1]

Life

In short, he was the heir of all the tendencies of the past, all the contributions of the Greek genius to philosophy and literature, a striking contrast to the one-sided Ionian philosophers. But of

[1] The atomistic philosophy of Leucippus and Democritus is never mentioned by Plato — a singular omission, possibly due to the general indifference of the Athenians to the studies of the Atomists.

all the crowding influences that bore on his many-sided temperament, that of Socrates overpowered the rest. For some eight years before the trial he was his devoted disciple. After the condemnation of Socrates on charges which included that of impiety, it seemed to Plato that the best, the wisest, the most just of all the men whom he had known, had been the least understood by his fellow-citizens. The vindication of the memory of Socrates he made his life work; all his highest and most impassioned flights of imagination, his triumphs of dialectic, his schemes for social reform, his moral and religious teaching, he stamped with the name and authority of Socrates. To himself he makes two or three allusions in passing, but for the rest keeps his own personality rigidly in the background.

On the death of Socrates in 399 Plato left Athens, and, after a visit to Megara, the home of the Socratic Eucleides, spent several years in travels in Egypt, Lower Italy, and Sicily. He was deeply impressed, as we may see from his dialogues, by the ancient civilization of Egypt, her unbroken traditions, and the wisdom of her priests. During a visit to Cyrene, he associated with the mathematician Theodorus. To Tarentum in Lower Italy he was no doubt attracted by the fame of Archytas the Pythagorean, renowned both for his contributions to geometry and physics, and for his statesmanship and military genius. Archytas was doubly interesting to Plato because he saw realized in the person of this remarkable man his ideal of a philosopher at the head of the state. His first journey to Sicily (*circa* 388 B.C.) was in answer to an invitation from Dionysius I, the tyrant of Syracuse, whose brother-in-law, Dio, had met and admired Plato in Italy. Dionysius was fond of literature and himself wrote tragedies. He would have liked to appear a second Hiero, surrounded by Greek men of letters, and Plato was glad of the chance to impart the philosophic virtues to a tyrant. But Dionysius was a self-made man who had risen to the throne by his personal energy and diplomacy. In the last eighteen years, under his rule, Syracuse had become one of the most powerful cities in Greece, strong

His travels

enough to defeat even Carthage. Such a man, at the age of forty-three, was not likely to accept the Utopian ideas of a brother-in-law, or to change his whole attitude to life at the bidding of a philosopher. If we are to believe the later authorities, the tyrant, growing suspicious of Plato's motives and influence, sent him to Aegina to be sold into slavery, from which he was ransomed by his friends and restored to Athens. There he now established his school of philosophy in the Academy, one of the three great gymnasia of Athens. His school was really a miniature university, like the famous school of rhetoric of which Isocrates was the head (see p. 338). Near the gymnasium he acquired land, and a house which was the center of the school; it was bequeathed at his death to Speusippus, its second head, and remained for centuries the property of the Academicians until the school was broken up by Justinian in 529 A.D.

In 367 Plato interrupted his teaching to revisit Sicily, at the request of Dio and Dionysius II, who had succeeded his father. In this younger and more impressionable tyrant, with Dio for his adviser, Plato hoped to find the material for his philosophic king. He was received with enthusiasm and began his instruction with a course in mathematics which was taken by the whole court. But the method was too strenuous for the tyrant, and the conservatives, who disliked the new influence, were soon able to persuade him that Dio was a dangerous conspirator who must be banished. Plato returned to Athens, disillusioned for the second time. But his ideals died hard, and a few years later he was induced to make a third visit, this time in the hope of reconciling Dio with Dionysius. The tyrant, though he did not meet his hopes, tried to detain him at the court, and it was only after much opposition that Plato managed to leave Syracuse (360 B.C.). That is the last recorded incident in his life. He spent his last years in teaching and writing, and died in 347 at the age of eighty.

In Sicily

Plato is the only Greek writer of the first rank of whose works nothing has been lost. The Socratics, who had been taught by

Socrates that cross-examination is the best method of imparting knowledge, naturally used the dialogue form for their own philosophic compositions. For such a monument as Plato was to build in honor of Socrates, the inveterate talker, the dialogue was peculiarly appropriate, and it suited his talent for dramatic writing. Under his name there are extant forty-two dialogues, thirteen letters, and some plainly spurious definitions. Of the dialogues thirty-five were accepted by the Alexandrians. Aristophanes of Byzantium (*circa* 200 B.C.) arranged them in trilogies. That was, as far as we know, the first canon. Another classification was made by Thrasyllus, who, in the first century A.D., arranged the dialogues in nine groups of four, called tetralogies. It is one of the lasting grievances of scholars against antiquity that it never occurred to a contemporary Academician, such as Speusippus, to write a list of Plato's works in chronological order. That simple act would have spared us the Platonic question with all the endless arguments as to the authenticity and order of Plato's works. A few of these have been recognized by all as above suspicion,[1] guaranteed as they are by the express testimony of Aristotle. We need not however dwell on the eccentricities of a criticism which attacked even the *Parmenides* and the *Sophist*, since a more temperate attitude has been adopted, of late years, by the majority of scholars. The *Letters*, though Christ and Wilamowitz are disposed to accept the sixth, and Christ defends the thirteenth, are now pretty generally regarded as post-Platonic, while several dialogues may safely be rejected, mainly on the score of post-Platonic and post-classical diction and their echoes of Aristotle. The following, all dialogues except the *Apology*, are generally accepted : *Apology*, *Euthyphro*, *Crito*, *Charmides*, *Laches*, *Lysis*, *Hippias Minor*, *Ion*,[2] *Menexenus*, *Protagoras*, *Meno*, *Euthydemus*,

The dialogues

[1] Schaarschmidt (1866) attacked the genuineness of all but nine of the thirty-five dialogues. Windelband (1893) rejects the *Parmenides*, *Sophist*, and *Statesman*.

[2] The *Ion* is rejected by Zeller, Wilamowitz, Susemihl.

Gorgias, Cratylus, Symposium, Phaedo, Republic, Phaedrus, Parmenides, Theaetetus, Sophist, Statesman, Philebus, Timaeus, Critias, Laws.

Chronology of the dialogues

That the *Laws* was Plato's latest work we learn from Aristotle; that the *Symposium* was composed after the division of Arcadia in 384 B.C., and that the *Meno* falls later than the bribery of Ismenias by the Persians in 395, we gather from internal evidence.[1] No one doubts that the *Timaeus* is a sequel to the *Republic*, or that the *Sophist* is a sequel to the *Theaetetus;* it seems certain that the *Protagoras* was written before the *Meno*. To decide the relative dates of the rest of the dialogues, after dividing them into several groups, has been, for about a century, the aim of students of Plato. For a generation the statistical method has been applied to the solution of the problem. The peculiarities of Plato's style, his use of terms, have been closely investigated, with the aim of proving the affinities of the dialogues and their place in the development of the Platonic philosophy. In many cases the statistics are inaccurate, and they have sometimes been abused. A writer who, like Lutoslawski, demonstrates the growth of Platonic logic from the statistics of five hundred peculiarities of style derived from some fifty independent dissertations, is too often misled by the inaccuracies of the writers of those dissertations.[2] The chief justification of the statistical method is that it has developed no glaring absurdity, except, indeed, the division of the *Republic* into strata separated by other dialogues,[3] and has left the *Laws* in its traditional place. The statisticians agree on a certain rough grouping

[1] Socrates, who died in 399, plays a leading part in the *Symposium* and *Meno;* Plato's bold use of anachronisms is one of the minor complications of the Platonic question.

[2] Lutoslawski's *Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, London, 1897, contains a good survey of the statistical study of Plato and is useful as a work of reference, in spite of the too confident conclusions of its 'stylometry' and the frequent misinterpretations of Plato's text.

[3] See Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers* III 51 ff. in defense of the unity of the *Republic.*

of the dialogues, and disagree as to the precise relations of the individual dialogues within the groups. The minor dialogues, called 'Socratic' because they deal with the Socratic search for definitions, for general concepts, fall early; the purely scientific or 'dialectical' dialogues, the *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, and *Statesman*, were late, while there is a middle period for which the *Republic* is the most important composition. Fortunately, it matters little to the student of Plato's philosophy or style whether the *Symposium* and the *Phaedo* were composed before or after the *Phaedrus*, and the special student who takes up the problem of stylistic affinity will find excellent arguments for and against either theory, and not infrequently the same argument worked both ways by the opposing sides.

Ethics

There is no doubt that, if Plato had been asked what was the end of his teaching, the goal of which he never lost sight in all his speculations, he would have replied that it was the improvement of the moral nature of man. As others lay down the principles of a science, he tried to formulate the laws that regulate conduct. Morality had for him a purely intellectual basis, since he agreed with Socrates that all virtue is knowledge. Courage, as is shown in the *Laches*, is based on the knowledge of what is and is not to be feared. In the *Charmides*, Critias and Charmides, Plato's oligarchical kinsmen, reveal to Socrates their ignorance of the essential meaning of temperance or sobriety of soul, a virtue not to be acquired by those unable to give an account of it. Like Socrates, Plato asserts that no one of his own free will does wrong. From his assumption that all men desire the good it follows that no man who can distinguish good and evil will choose evil. Sin is, therefore, but another word for ignorance. For should some clever and worldly man, like Callicles in the *Gorgias*, deliberately choose the life of pleasure and decline to set his ideal higher than that of the world about him, Plato sees, in that choice, ignorance of the art of life, of the real nature of happiness. The great thesis of the *Gorgias*, that it is more blessed to suffer wrong than to inflict it, remains unshaken. Sin

is an error of arithmetic, for one who could count or measure the real values of what he chooses or rejects would always make a virtuous choice. So he maintains in the *Protagoras*,[1] supporting with this proof from hedonism his contention that the virtues can be reduced to knowledge, and can therefore be taught. After many years, we find him asserting, in the fifth book of the *Laws*, that the virtuous life is the happiest, actually contains the most pleasures, tested by the hedonistic calculus. Pleasure was a word that Plato would gladly have dropped from his vocabulary. He was afraid of the natural instincts, had a genuine aesthetic dislike of them, was consistently unfair to the hedonists, and was happiest when he could assume, as in the *Philebus*,[2] that pleasure, when most intense, is connected with disease of mind and body. In the first part of that dialogue, which is one of the latest group, he allows what seems to us a false antithesis, the opposition of pleasure and knowledge.[3] He refused to admit the possibility of happiness without virtue, or of virtue without freedom from desire.

Plato's assertion in the *Gorgias*, an apologia for the life of contemplation, that the philosophic life is happier than the life of action, is, of course, the reflection of a personal taste. With the ambition of the born man of action to exercise his power of ruling men he had no sympathy. He was the very antithesis of Alcibiades and Critias, and was convinced that one of the surest proofs that a man is fit to govern is his unwillingness to do so.[4] He condemned the political ideals of all the greatest statesmen of Athens, Pericles among the rest. He saw in the rule of the majority at Athens all the dangers of the free development of the Ionian "centrifugal" temperament, and whereas Thucydides[5] had admired the ability of the individual Athenian to adapt himself to the most varied forms of activity with versatility and grace, Plato deplored the Athenian tendency to individualism, the Heracleitean flux of standards. Mobility and variety were vices in his eyes; change was a sign of

Political ideals

[1] 356–357. [2] 45 B–E. [3] Cp. *Rep.* 505 B.
[4] *Rep.* 520–521. [5] 2. 40–41.

decadence. In the *Republic*, as though to offset the picture of Thucydides, he describes just such an 'agreeable, lawless, many-colored commonwealth' as that of Athens, and turns from all that to admire a community in which amateurism and versatility had never been prized or even allowed, where the individual had always been trained to subordinate his private inclinations and tastes to the general good of the state. But even in Dorian Lacedaemon, the home of discipline and self-denial, with its traditions almost as fixed as those of Egypt, its austerity of life, its incarnation of the "centripetal" genius of the Dorians, Plato did not find all that he dreamed of for his Utopia. Not in Lacedaemon, any more than in Sicily, were philosophers at the head of the state, and for Plato there could be no well-ordered community in which the rulers were not philosophers.

It was in the *Republic*, his masterpiece, that he expressed his passionate conviction of the failure of democracy as he had seen it at Athens, and of a tyranny like that at Syracuse. As he re-

The Republic

builds from the foundations the whole political fabric, leaving not one stone upon another of the Athenian constitution, we see how completely he was out of sympathy with his times, with Athenian ideals and ambitions, with the whole range of Hellenic culture which it was the pride of Athens to foster and represent. It is as a political treatise, as the first description of a "perfect city," a Utopia, that the *Republic* is now read by all students of politics and social reformers, who rarely imagine a reconstruction of society without borrowing some features of Plato's ideal state. Community of property, the abolition of the family, universal brotherhood based on the possibility that any man may be one's brother, state regulation of the breeding of the citizens, provision against race suicide, equality of the sexes on the ground that there is no intellectual difference between them, compulsory education, the compulsory vote — for all these, though they were not all original with Plato,[1] one may turn to the

[1] *E.g.* Herod. 4. 104 had described the community of women among the Agathyrsi, designed to secure harmony and to 'make brothers' of the tribesmen.

Republic or the *Laws*. The most striking feature in his ideal republic was the rigid subordination of the uneducated and working classes to a highly educated oligarchy of philosophers, trained by dialectic to grasp the nature of real existence, and persuaded, for their country's good, to turn from their philosophical pursuits and prove that the truly wise man is the best general, the best lawyer, the best legislator. Plato's ethical ideals never varied, and in the *Laws* he reiterates the main thesis of the *Republic*, the coincidence of justice and happiness. But he recognized in his old age the possible dangers to the community of philosophic absolutism, since even philosophers are human beings, not safely to be intrusted with such powers, and so we have in the *Laws* an acceptance of what, for Plato, was the second best, a decided modification of his political ideals, a revision of them more adapted to men as they are. Enough remains that is alien to us, as it was to Plato's contemporaries. He will allow no art that is not severely didactic, admits trade with the greatest reluctance, would suppress finance, rejects the Lacedaemonian ideal of war and conquest, and, as in the *Republic*, leaves as little opening for what we call progress as though he were organizing a monastery.

In Athens, a man who desired to enter public life sought the society of sophists like Gorgias or Protagoras, or attended the famous school of the rhetorician Isocrates. Plato could not observe this with indifference. There were sophists of all kinds, as there are always teachers of all kinds, but though Plato might respect individuals among them, he never wavered in condemning the sophistic ideal of education as dangerous and unscientific. He paid Protagoras and Gorgias the compliment of reproducing their brilliant rhetoric, and frankly shows us how fascinating they were, how natural it was that they should attract the young and ambitious. He knew well that the most effective satire is that which makes every concession to the victim before it exposes his weaknesses. He disliked and derided all the aspects of sophistic, the pretension to omniscience, the sophist's claim that he could talk down any expert by sheer

Hostility to the sophists

ingenuity of speech,[1] the long set speeches by which he avoided the issue when confronted by a Socratic cross-examination. He disapproved of the sophistic preoccupation with poetry. Steadily refusing to separate aesthetics from ethics, he had driven the poets out of his ideal city because they encouraged the imagination and the emotional side. The poet, inasmuch as he diverted men's eyes from the divine realities to the 'imitation of an imitation,' was, like the sophist, an illusionist. Above all, he disliked the subjectivity of sophistic ethics, the sophist's acceptance of conventional morality and of the individual man as the measure. Eristic, the quibbling with paradoxes based on the wrong use of language, to which the Zenonian dialectic had degenerated, he satirized in the *Euthydemus*. As for the rhetoric of such a one as Isocrates, he insisted that, at its best, it was merely a branch of philosophy, strictly subordinate to ethics and dialectic; that the rhetorician must learn to define, and divide, and classify, is one of the lessons of the *Phaedrus*.[2]

Virtue as envisaged by Plato could never have for its foundation the merely relative knowledge of the ordinary statesman, or rhetorician, or sophist.[3] To the Heracleitean flux and the relativity taught by Protagoras he opposed the Theory of Ideas, which, on the philosophic side, was his great contribution to the history of thought, while it is closely associated with his ethical and political theories. Socrates in his search for moral truth had arrived at inductive definitions. He had endeavored to replace knowledge derived from individual perceptions by universal concepts that were to be independent of popular opinion. To Plato's realistic philosophy the universal concept became an objective type, an entity more real than 'the real thing' that can

Theory of Ideas

[1] The *locus classicus* is the self-advertisement of Gorgias in Plato's *Gorgias* 452 E.

[2] The relations of Plato and Isocrates have been endlessly discussed since Spengel's *Isokrates u. Plato*, 1855. See Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers* III 25 ff. (Eng. trans.).

[3] *Cratylus* 389, 440 B.

be perceived by the senses. The Platonic Ideas are all concepts, but they exist apart from the mind. Plato saw the difficulties of this realistic treatment of universals, this isolation of the Ideas, and debated some of them in the *Parmenides*. What is the precise relation of the objective type, the thing that is, the noumenon, to phenomena, the things that become, the particulars of the world of sense? Is the Idea actually present in the particular, or is the latter, which derives all its qualities solely from the Idea, merely a copy, an imitation, a shadow of the immaterial original? Are there ideas of all kinds, of hair and dirt, of relations and negations, just as much as of the Good and the Beautiful? These were questions that Plato never definitely answered. 'He left them,' says Aristotle,[1] 'to be investigated by others.' The doctrine was 'hard to accept, hard to deny,' as he himself says in the *Republic* (532 D), and his terminology when he writes of the Ideas is so varied that he left the way open to his commentators to disagree endlessly as to whether he believed from first to last in his purely objective types, and did not essentially modify his doctrine about them, though he took them from different points of view according to the requirements of the dialogues,[2] or whether, as many scholars maintain, he abandoned in the later dialogues the theory that they could exist outside the conscious soul. Those who, like Lutoslawski, hold the latter view, are compelled to throw overboard the testimony of Aristotle that the Platonic Idea was transcendental, and the evidence of passages in the later dialogues that Plato so conceived it.[3]

Dialectic, that is to say, argument on the nature of these, the only, realities, is the only method by which men may attain to a knowledge of them and of the supreme reality, the Idea of the Good. For even in that immaterial world there is a hierarchy of Ideas; the Idea of the Good is to the rest as is the sun to

[1] *Met.* I. 6.

[2] An excellent defense of this view is made by Shorey, *The Unity of Plato's Thought*, Chicago, 1903.

[3] *E.g. Timaeus* 52 A.

phenomena in the visible world.[1] The dialectician is aided by Reminiscence (*ἀνάμνησις*). Plato believed in the preëxistence of the soul, that "birth is but a sleep and a forgetting," that all knowledge is recollection.[2] In the *Phaedrus* he describes how the soul before birth may mount with the heavenly train of gods to the plain of truth on the very roof of heaven, and thence behold the Ideas. He who has the clearest memory of that "vision splendid" is best suited for dialectic, may become a philosopher, an "eye among the blind." At birth one is nearest to the divine Ideas; when one loves, one has the best chance in one's life to approach them again through the passion for beauty; and the dying philosopher, like Socrates in the *Phaedo*, may at least hope that he is about to recover the complete vision.

Reminiscence

To describe the Ideas, *without color, without form, intangible, visible only to the intelligence* (*Phaedrus* 247) was, as Plato knew, beyond the power of human speech, and it is only in such a myth as that of the *Phaedrus* or the *Symposium* that he speaks as though the eye of the soul might behold the invisible essences. He was too much of a poet not to desire to write about them in the language of exaltation, and for this purpose he takes refuge in the use of myth. In certain of the dialogues, the *Phaedo*, the *Symposium*, and the *Phaedrus*, the myth is almost as important as the heroic myth in a Pindaric ode. In these moments of exaltation Plato abandons the economy of emotion which he thought so necessary to dialectic, and allows himself to exhort instead of argue.

The Myths

All the great impressive myths that deal with the Ideas and the fate of the soul are put in the mouth of Socrates. In the *Phaedo* myth (107–114) he describes the surface of the 'true earth,' in a hollow of which men live, its trees, flowers, fruits, and precious stones, its overarching, ampler aether, and, with a geography not unlike that of Dante's Earthly Paradise,[3] tells of the place of

[1] *Rep.* 508 ff.

[2] *Meno* 80 ff.; *Phaedo* 72 ff.; *Phaedrus* 249.

[3] See Stewart, *The Myths of Plato*, London, 1905.

judgment for the souls of the dead, their punishments and rewards. In the *Gorgias* myth (523–527) is a description of the Islands of the Blessed, and the meadow where the judges, Minos, Rhadamanthys and Aeacus sit and look through and through the scarred and crooked souls of the dead. In the myth of Er in the *Republic* (614–621) is yet another picture of the meadow of the judgment seat, whence the dead souls journey to the throne of Lachesis to choose each his lot for another course of earthly life. The myth of the *Phaedrus* (246–257) is devoted to love, which is described as a form of divine madness, the soul's aspiration to the True, the Beautiful, and the Good. *Beauty itself, brightly shining, it was given them to behold, then when they followed in the blessed choir . . . eyewitnesses of visions which are altogether fair, and of single nature, without shadow of change. . . . These things our souls beheld in pure light, themselves being pure and without the mark of this which we call body, and now carry about with us, as the fish carrieth the prison house of his shell.*

The Platonic myths, "which who knoweth not to be flowers of poetry did never walk into Apollo's garden," those passages for which, like Coleridge, he demanded from his hearers "a momentary suspension of disbelief," are, for us, a literary embellishment of the dialogues, digressions which some of us, like Theodorus in the *Theaetetus* (177 C), like better than the argument. In the seventeenth century this side of Plato's teaching was emphasized by the Cambridge Platonists, for whom Plato was a prophet, and the Theory of Ideas to be interpreted as the basis of a religious mysticism. In this they were but following the example of the Neo-Platonists of Alexandria. The mystical theology and enthusiasm of Plotinus, his yearning for separation from the body and for purely spiritual sensations, carried him far from the severe Platonic dialectic and the scientific drift of Plato's teaching. Plato was destined to fall into the hands of extremists. From his works, Emerson's "Bible of the learned, out of which come all things that are still written and debated among men," the scholastic controversialists of the Middle Ages singled out his realism

The Neo-Platonists

as his chief characteristic, and it was under his flag that the Realists debated with the Nominalists, who opposed to the Platonic types their doctrine that only the individual has real existence, that genera and species are merely subjective combinations.

Plato's dialogues usually took the form of accounts of conversations. This gave him a chance for dramatic descriptions of the setting and characters of the piece, for the picture of the well-ordered house of the rich old metic Cephalus, at the Piraeus, where Socrates with Plato's brothers wove the many-colored texture of the *Republic*, or the supper at the house of Agathon, the tragic poet in the *Symposium*. In the later dialogues we have no such vivid impression of the scene and the interlocutors. That long walk in Crete from Cnossos to the grotto of Zeus on Ida does not dwell in our minds as the inseparable background of the *Laws*, as do the rustling plane tree, the summer sounds and scents that haunt the *Phaedrus*. In his old age long expositions grew more frequent with Plato. In the *Laws* he seems to retain the dialogue form rather from habit than because he felt it to be appropriate; the whole of the fifth Book is a monologue. Another note of change is that in the latest dialogues Socrates is no longer the chief speaker; in the *Laws* his place is taken by an 'Athenian stranger,' who is perhaps meant for Plato himself.

Style

Plato's style is all his own, varied like his interests, and cannot be brought under the rules of the rhetoricians. It stands midway between poetry and prose, and its strongly poetic coloring greatly distressed the very critics who recognized in Plato one of the few masters of the grand style. Poetic diction set his genius best. He knew that, as he says in the *Laws*,[1] he wrote 'speeches very like poetry,' and in the *Phaedrus*[2] he forestalled his critics by ridiculing his own tendency to become dithyrambic in moments of exaltation. What the writers on rhetoric probably forgot, is Plato's fondness for parodying the fashionable styles of writing. When they accuse him of Gorgianic figures in the *Menexenus*, they forget that he

[1] 811. [2] 238, 241.

wrote this funeral oration as a parody of the epideictic manner, to prove that he, who was always ridiculing the rhetoricians, could compose, as well as Lysias or another, a show piece with all the stock rhetorical ornaments, which should make his hearers 'feel better men for three or four days.'[1] Even in that speech, as Gomperz has pointed out, he is carried away by his theme, the praise of Athens, so that here and there he forgets to parody, and rises to real eloquence. The Greek critics forgave Plato his poetic coloring in consideration of the clearness and fragrance of his 'gliding style,' the easy cadence that gave a charm to his simplest utterances.[2] 'He flows on with a quiet stream, but with a manner none the less elevated,' says Longinus, who always tempers a criticism of Plato's style with a tribute to a genius which ranks the higher in that it is not without some flaws. All allowed that Plato had hit off the best style for the literary dialogue, the language that 'Zeus might have used, if Zeus had spoken Greek.'

Epigrams

Thirty-three epigrams in the *Anthology* were ascribed to Plato. These were woven by Meleager into his *Garland* of Greek poets, in the first century B.C., *the golden bough of Plato, ever divine, shining everywhere in excellence.* Some of them are among the finest Greek epigrams that have survived. Shelley translated and popularized one of the sepulchral type: —

Thou wert the Morning-star among the living
Ere thy fair light had fled;
Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving
New splendor to the dead.[3]

Almost as famous is the *Star*: —

Thou gazest at the stars, my star; O might I be
That sky, with myriad eyes to gaze on thee![4]

These are the most popular. But Plato could rise above the cleverness and prettiness that too often give the Greek epigram a

[1] *Menexenus* 235 B.
[2] Demetrius, *On Style* 183 ff.; Dionysius, *To Pompeius* 2.
[3] *Anth. Pal.* 7. 670. [4] *ib.* 7. 669.

merely superficial charm. This he proved in the elegy for Dio, the Sicilian philosopher whom he had loved, whose short-lived tyranny at Syracuse had been one of the bitterest of his friend's disillusions: *Tears were the lot of the Ilian women and Hecuba, spun in the web of their fate on the day of their birth. But for thee, Dio, wide were the hopes that the gods showered down as they received the thank-offering for victory. And now thou liest in thine own land, and men pay thee honor in death. But I loved thee to madness, O Dio!*[1]

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CHAPTER XXI

ARISTOTLE

ARISTOTLE[1] (384–322 B.C), son of Nicomachus, was born at Stageira, an Ionian colony on the northeast coast of Chalcidice, which, like nearly all the Chalcidian cities, was annexed by Philip in 349. His father was court physician to Amyntas II of Macedonia.

Life

But, as far as we know, Aristotle lived at Stageira until the age of seventeen, and, in spite of the long years that he spent at Athens, remained at heart a Stageirite, unconverted to the political aims of Athens or Macedonia. His ideal of a state was a modified Stageira. Of his father's influence there is no trace. At Athens his guardian was a certain Proxenus, to whose son, Nicanor, Aristotle betrothed by will his only daughter. At first he studied in the school of Isocrates, as though he had been intended for the life of a public man. But before he was well out of his teens, Plato returned from his last attempt to convert the court of Sicily, and Aristotle soon forsook rhetoric for philosophy. Isocrates can have had no deeper grudge against Plato than this defection of one who might have been the chief ornament of the Isocratic school. Long after he had himself reached maturity, Aristotle remained the faithful pupil of Plato, not breaking away from the Academy, in spite of his own independent judgments and certain marked differences of philosophic creed. On Plato's death he left Athens to accept the invitation of a fellow-disciple, Hermeias, tyrant of Atarneus on the Mysian coast. Under the patronage of Hermeias he spent three years near Atarneus, perhaps at Assos. When Hermeias had been

[1] The main facts and dates of Aristotle's life are given concisely by Dionys. Hal., *First Letter to Ammaeus* 5.

put to death by Persian intrigues, Aristotle, at Philip's request, went to the Macedonian court at Pella as the tutor of Alexander, then a boy of fourteen. With Alexander's ambitions he can have had no sympathy, and he would probably have rejected Milton's saying that he

"bred great Alexander to subdue the world."

In 335 he returned to Athens to found the school of the Lyceum, where his lectures, delivered during promenades, gave its name to the Peripatetic school of philosophy. This was another fresh start in a life that was somewhat at the mercy of events. He had now reached the age of forty-nine, the moment when, as he thought, the mind of man is at its prime.[1] For the next twelve years he lectured in the Lyceum. But in 323 the death of Alexander changed the face of affairs, and he was forced by the Athenian reaction against Macedonia to retire to Chalcis, where he died in 322, the year of the death of Demosthenes. He left a daughter named Pythias, and an illegitimate son Nicomachus, immortalized by the association of his name with the *Ethics*. Aristotle's will is quoted by Diogenes Laertius.[2] His papers were inherited by Theophrastus, his successor in the school, and on his death they came into the possession of Neleus of Skepsis in the Troad. There they remained for about a century and a half, hidden in a cellar, were brought back to Athens at the end of the second century B.C., then to Rome after Sulla's conquest of Athens in 86, and were, at last, published by the tenth scholarch of the Peripatetic school, Andronicus of Rhodes, about 50 B.C.[3]

Aristotle's lectures had been of two kinds: acroamatic (esoteric), reserved for advanced pupils, and those of a more popular cast, called exoteric. The edition of Andronicus did not include the popular works, and they have survived only in fragments. A text

[1] *Rhetoric* 2. 23. [2] 5. 12.

[3] This tradition is preserved by Strabo 13, 1. In spite of his statement to the contrary, there is no doubt that copies of the originals were always in use by the Peripatetics.

which had encountered such vicissitudes must have been much mutilated, and much survived that Aristotle can never have intended for publication in its present unrevised form. But where we have not the exact Aristotelian language, we may at least feel that we have Aristotle's ideas. His cast of thought, the "note" of Aristotle, is as unmistakable as Plato's.

We must always deplore the loss of the more popular works published by Aristotle himself. These were chiefly dialogues, written no doubt in imitation of Plato, and their titles recall the Platonic dialogues: *On Friendship*, *On Justice*, *Menexenus*, *Symposium*. In dialogue form may have been the *Exhortation to Philosophy*, the *Protrepticus*, which was addressed, after the fashion of an Isocratic tract, to Themison, king of Cyprus, and was imitated by Cicero in the *Hortensius*.

For the works that survive, the question of relative date hardly arises. They contain numerous cross-references, and were worked over and added to by Aristotle himself, and perhaps by members of the school, also. As we have them they represent no final revision made by their author with a view to publication, and are often hardly more than lecture notes, material for possible text-books.

The works on logic would have been placed first by Aristotle in any systematic grouping. Want of culture for him meant ignorance of method, 'analytics.' As the instrument of dialectic these works on method were called by the later Peripatetics the *Organon* ('tool' or 'instrument'). Of the great system of logic which he planned but did not complete we have only portions. The *Categories*, perhaps not genuine, contains the forms of thought which are so essential a part of Aristotelian terminology, — quantity (τὸ ποσόν), quality (τὸ ποιόν), place (τὸ ποῦ), time (τὸ ποτέ), and the rest of the famous Ten. The *Topics*, on the method of probability, reflects the disputations of the sophists, discusses dialectic, and has a sequel in the *Sophistici Elenchi* (*Sophistic Refutations*), studies in eristic rather than dialectic. His great contribution to logic was the syllogism discussed in the *Analytics*.

The Organon

In the field of natural science we have the *History of Animals*, and three minor treatises on the same general subject. In *Concerning the Sky* (commonly known as the *De Caelo*) he discusses, from the standpoint of the science of his day, the nature of the heavens and the motion of the planets. In the *Physics* he treats of Matter, Form, Being, Becoming, Motion, and the doctrine of causes: the final, from which flow all results that have any value, and the material or secondary cause, from which comes all that is imperfect or accidental.

Natural science

Among the surviving treatises on Psychology and Metaphysics is *Concerning the Soul* (*De Anima*), in which he maintains the presence of soul in all things that have life, including plants, reserving intelligence as the peculiar possession of mankind. In the *Metaphysics*, which he called First Philosophy, the first sentence, *All men instinctively desire knowledge*, lays down, in Aristotle's fashion, a universal law which the argument that follows is to elaborate. The *Metaphysics* received its title, not from Aristotle himself, but from later disciples who wished to indicate its relation as coming after the *Physics*. The subject-matter of this treatise, the four causes, formal, material, efficient, final, universals, and absolute existence, he regarded as the highest objects of human investigation. One after another he reviews critically the pre-Socratic philosophers, and then develops his own theory of Being. He rejects the Platonic theory of the independence of the universal concept. Class concepts are real only as they exist in things. He maintained the Platonic antithesis of true Being, recognized by its permanent and universal qualities, and phenomena, which, when not imagined conceptually, are inferior, as being subject to changing states and conditions. But the theory he traced back to Socrates; Plato had overdeveloped it. His two last Books are a criticism of the Platonic Theory of Ideas. Their most weighty objections had been forestalled by Plato himself in the *Parmenides*, the difficulty of relating Ideas to phenomena, how to maintain their unity, the 'third man,' and the rest, problems that arise against any theory

Psychology and Metaphysics

of the absolute. Plato had left them unanswered, and they were, in fact, unanswerable.

The Ethics

The *Ethics*, commonly called the *Nicomachean* to distinguish it from the *Eudemian Ethics* which, though included with the works of Aristotle, is from the hand of a disciple, has been labeled by tradition with the name of Aristotle's son, who died as a youth, yet may have lived long enough to edit these lectures. The treatise may be regarded as part of Aristotle's practical philosophy. *Every art and science*, he begins, *every action and purpose seems to have some good as its object.* Happiness is the chief good, the end and aim of all human action. There is a legend that, when Plato lectured on the Absolute Good, which, though it is never exactly defined, is described in the sixth Book of the *Republic* as the ideal standard of all philosophers and philosophic statesmen, his audience melted away until Aristotle alone remained. Aristotle did not, of course, accept Plato's Good conceived as a transcendental Idea. He pointed out that it could be brought under his ten Categories, and therefore could not have an independent existence.[1] It was, he thought, a poetical abstraction, of no use to the practical man, for whom he himself supplied a working doctrine of virtue and happiness: *We may then safely define the happy man as one whose activity accords with perfect virtue and who is adequately furnished with external goods, not for a casual period of time, but for a complete or perfect lifetime. But perhaps we ought to add that he will always live so, and will die as he lives.*[2] Spencer,[3] from the standpoint of modern utilitarian ethics, brackets together Aristotle's and Plato's conceptions of virtue and happiness, and condemns them both as unpractical in assuming an ideal good.[4] Aristotle had before him an audience thoroughly familiar with Plato's writings, and he constantly assumes such a knowledge — especially in the *Ethics*, where he was

[1] *Ethics* 1. 4. [2] *Ethics* 1. 10. Welldon's translation.

[3] *Data of Ethics* 13.

[4] For a discussion of the whole question of the Good as envisaged by Plato and Aristotle, see Shorey, *The Idea of Good in Plato's Republic.*

dealing with a subject that Plato had thought of the first importance. When he attacks the Platonic doctrine, it is with an apology echoed from Plato's own words: 'It is not that I love Plato less, but Truth more.'[1] The *Ethics* throughout is an argument, though Aristotle abandoned in such lectures as these the dialogue form which Plato gave to his own dialectic.

The *Magna Moralia* is now generally regarded as a Peripatetic treatise on ethics written after Aristotle's day, though still in the third century B.C., so that it represents the school tradition. Of the *Eudemian Ethics*, now generally ascribed to Eudemus of Rhodes, Books 4–6 are almost identical with Books 5–7 of the *Nicomachean*. Hence these latter are assigned to Eudemus by some critics. As an objection to this theory, Burnet points out in his edition of the *Ethics* that Eudemus, who was a mathematician, as Aristotle was not, would not have used mathematical formulae with so little clearness as is displayed by the author of the account of Justice in Book 5.

The Magna Moralia

Aristotle regarded ethics as a branch of political science, to be treated as 'a sort of politics,' and he wrote the *Politics* as a natural sequel to the *Ethics*. Like Plato, he thought politics the highest of the arts, the most architectonic, and political activity the activity most appropriate to man. He intended his lectures on politics to show how the Good of man, which he had discussed in the *Ethics*, could be put into practice in a state. Plato in the *Republic* had discussed ethics and politics together, making the closest parallel between the individual soul in all its varieties, and the various political states or forms of government. Aristotle, though he wrote two separate treatises, always assumes in his *Ethics* a political setting for the virtues, and would have thought those lectures incomplete without the *Politics*. Happiness is to be seen at its best and highest in a political state. The *Politics* is crowded with reminiscences of the Platonic writings, besides certain definite criticisms of Plato's Utopia. Aristotle declined to abolish the family by establishing a community of wives

The Politics

[1] Cp. *Ethics* 6 with Plato, *Republic* 595 C.

and children, pointing out that, under those conditions, there would be but a diluted affection to bind the citizens together. Blood would not really be thicker than water where all men were brothers. He was not dazzled, like Plato, by the Spartan ideal, nor, on the other hand, had he anything to say about the growth of such an empire as that conceived by Alexander. His ideal is the small, autonomous, aristocratic city-state ; it is the traditions of such city-states that he is interested in summing up, and he either did not see or ignored the fact that their day in Greece was over.

Education

The education of the citizen was one of the main topics. But in the work as we have it his views are incomplete. What he had to say on the training of the body we have in full, and his ideas on music as a means in the education of character.[1] But of the education of the mind there is not a word. He was no mathematician, nor did his school turn its attention to mathematics, as the Academy had done. It is, therefore, not certain that he would have prescribed for his youthful citizen that training in mathematics which Plato thought the essential prelude to dialectic. Plato's pupils had been trained in the Academy partly by the study of plants and animals,[2] and biology, botany, and physics were the favorite studies of the Lyceum. Plato had taken slavery for granted, though he had said that Hellenic prisoners of war must never be so degraded. Aristotle's attitude is a slight advance, in that he perceived the whole question of the justice of slavery to be open to discussion and beset with difficulties,[3] which he reviews at length. But he thought slavery justified for the class of men who are 'slaves by nature,' men whose function is mere physical service because they are incapable of anything better.

In both the *Ethics* and *Politics* we have the lecture-room manner of Aristotle, and we may safely regard them as having been

[1] *Politics* 8.

[2] In a play of Epicrates, *fr.* 11 (Kock), Plato and his school are described as bending all their energies to the definition of a gourd.

[3] *Politics* 1. 5–6.

written by him in something like their present form, for delivery, though certainly not, as they stand, for publication. They are in the colloquial manner, and throughout he seems to feel his way through the argument, deliberately to choose the tone of dialectic rather than that of one who offers dogmatic teaching.

It appears to have been his practice to collect a vast amount of material for his educational works, to construct, as it were, his own reference books. It was, perhaps, with a view to writing the *Politics* that he made his descriptions of *Constitutions*, 158 in number. These tracts, which Plutarch found interesting reading, have disappeared, with one exception. A portion of the *Constitution of Athens* was recovered in 1885 from an Egyptian papyrus. Not long after, there were further finds, so that we now have the work almost entire. The *editio princeps* was published in 1891,[1] the year which saw the appearance of the first edition of Herodas. The *Constitution of Athens* is a political pamphlet, intended for the guidance of the ideal statesman. Aristotle, like Plato, despaired of society as he found it, and had no illusions on the subject of Athenian democracy. This tract, however, since it concerned a state of which he was a citizen for twenty years, was perhaps worked over more carefully than the other descriptions of constitutions. He was no historian, like Herodotus or Thucydides, and this is no monument of historical research. He assumes a knowledge of history in his readers and draws on the poems of Solon, the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides, and those Attic chroniclers who, like Hellanicus, wrote each his *Atthis*, or chronicles of Athens, in the fourth century. The first part of the tract is historical, the second analytical. Aristotle describes the development of the Athenian constitution from the earliest times down to the restoration of the democracy after the fall of the Thirty Tyrants, after which date there was no more to be learned from the constitutional history of Athens. There could hardly be a more impartial historian than Aristotle as he calmly surveyed the past of his adopted city, and described

The Constitution of Athens

[1] Kenyon, London.

the machinery of her government in his own day, the Ecclesia, the senate, the magistrates, the law courts. In the *Politics* he showed how little of all this he accepted for his ideal city. The date of the tract is generally placed within the years 334–325 B.C., when Aristotle was near the close of his career, writing with the full authority of age, and his position as a renowned teacher. That it was probably intended for the general reader is indicated by the style, which is a great improvement on that of the other extant writings, clear and fluent, the style of work that he published as opposed to the note-book manner.[1]

The Poetics

The *Poetics* is a critical document which in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries became the canon of dramatic composition. The tract as we have it, the first formal treatise on poetry, is incomplete. Only the first Book has survived, and that with many alterations and mutilations. The second, *On Comedy*, is lost save for a few fragments. All art, he said, following Plato's lead in the *Republic* and *Phaedrus*, is 'imitation.' Of the types of poetic imitation he chose out three, tragedy, epic, and the dithyramb, this last for the sake of its relation to the drama, for Greek lyric in its many other forms he ignores, no doubt because he was indifferent to it. He proceeds to define tragedy as *the imitation of an action that is serious* (or *of moral distinction*), *complete and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions*.[2] The six parts of tragedy are Plot, Character (which he thought more important than Plot), Diction, Thought, Scenery, Song. He would have been no Greek had he not given ethics its due, both in his prescription for the tragic hero, who must fall by some striking fault and be neither too good nor too bad for our sympathies, and in the famous doctrine of *catharsis*, the purgation of pity and terror. Aristotle's spectator is to be

[1] This improvement is ascribed by Kaibel to the influence of Herodotus.

[2] c. 6. Butcher's translation.

roused to the height of these emotions by the sight of so much disaster, and his soul is to be purged of them in a manner that much explanation on the part of scholars has never made precise. Aesthetic pleasure comes from the sight of so much clever imitation, from the rhythm, the language, the music, the surprises, the recognitions, the character drawing. The *Oedipus Tyrannus* is Aristotle's model play, and he admires the relation there of recognition and reversal (complete change of circumstances), the second following immediately, as it should, upon the first. Aristotle saw in unity the formal principle of all aesthetic beauty, and the seventh and eighth chapters discuss the question of dramatic unity, and were the starting-point of the famous theory of the 'Unities.' The only unity that he demands in a drama is unity of action. Every part of the plot must be necessary to the whole, and that whole must be such as the eye can grasp with ease. He had said that the time limit of a tragedy should be 'a single revolution of the sun or only a little longer,'[1] but to this he had prefixed 'as far as possible,' and laid down no rigid rule. The third unity, of place, is not so much as mentioned. How then did the 'Unities' under the name of Aristotle become a law for Europe? It seems to have been the Italians who first, in the sixteenth century, introduced the law of the unities, first of time and then of place. In England the unity of place was formulated as we find it, together with the unity of time, in Sidney's *Apology for Poetry* written in the latter part of the sixteenth century. In France the three Unities were formulated about 1630, a century later than Sidney. Boileau erected the theory into a dogma,[2] and Voltaire and others accepted it without question as Aristotelian, until Lessing appealed to the *Poetics* to prove that the theorists had gone far beyond Aristotle.

The last chapters are a comparison of epic and tragedy, their

[1] c. 5.

[2] *Art Poétique* (published in 1674): —

"Qu'en un lieu qu'en un jour, un seul fait accompli
Tienne jusqu'a la fin le théâtre rempli."

See Breitinger, *Les Unités d'Aristote*, Geneva, 1895.

different laws of composition and their respective merits. For Aristotle, as poetry is the highest of the arts, so tragedy is the highest form of poetry. His dramatic aesthetics are not, of course, appropriate to the modern theater, and we cannot but feel that a critic of the drama who never dreamed of such an apparition as Shakespeare, and in epic did not forebode Vergil, Dante, and Milton, has little to say to the modern reader. Aesthetic criticism was indeed not in his line, so much his deafness to Greek lyric might prove; his view was narrowed by what he had before him; he looked back as one who saw the final achievements of literature which it only remained for him to appraise, and dreamed of no new types; his treatise is unfinished, and in the roughest shape, perhaps mere lecture notes; but as far as he goes Aristotle is, as Lessing said of him, "infallible as the *Elements* of Euclid," and he is both ingenious and just. His terminology and definitions (though chapter 12 with the famous definitions of Prologue, Parodos, and the rest is out of place and perhaps not even genuine) remain unalterable and of real value.

There had been many rhetorical handbooks, chiefly dealing with legal oratory, before Aristotle, but he created the art of rhetoric.[1]

The Rhetoric

His *Rhetoric* (3 Books) was written as the counterpart, in an allied field, of his *Logic*. As that is the art of discussion, so rhetoric is for him the art of persuading in any subject, and he set out to systematize and reduce to rules the processes common to all who speak and write to carry their point. In the first Book he considers the kinds of proofs, whence to get and how to use them, and the rhetorical syllogism (enthymeme); the three kinds of rhetoric, deliberative, judicial, and epideictic (we owe to him those categories), their special topics and illustrations, and the audiences that go with each. In the second Book he follows Plato's hint in the *Phaedrus* of the need of psychology as the basis of rhetoric, and analyzes the passions, habits, and tastes of the type of men whom the speaker will have to persuade, a

[1] See Spengel, Συναγωγὴ τεχνῶν, Stuttgart, 1828; Navarre, *La Rhétorique Grecque avant Aristote*, Paris, 1900.

systematic psychology of rhetoric. Those chapters (1–12) on rhetorical 'êthos' for men of different ages and conditions may have been intended for logographers, speechwrights who at Athens must adapt every speech to the temperament and condition of the client who had to deliver it. It was from this book that Horace took his Four Ages of human life. Throughout, oratory is the form of prose composition which dominates Aristotle's mind, as in the *Poetics* tragedy overshadows all other forms of poetry, even epic. The third Book, far the most famous, is more concerned with the literary side of the subject, with style and arrangement. It seems to have been composed separately, and could almost stand alone, like the tract of Demetrius. Aristotle was not profoundly interested in style. After deciding that it must be clear and appropriate he devotes much discussion to the use of metaphors, and reveals a curious strictness which puts him out of touch here and there with modern taste, as when, in his horror of the poetical or exaggerated in prose, he blames Alcidamas for calling the *Odyssey* a 'fair mirror of human life.' His discussion of rhythm, with the warning (much needed in the next centuries) against its abuse, is the basis of much that followed in the theorists, Dionysius, for instance, in his essay *On the Arrangement of Words*. They adopted from him the preference for paeonic rhythm, of whose four possible forms he praised –⏑⏑⏑ and ⏑⏑⏑–, the latter for the end of a clause. In this Book he distinguishes the two styles, the continuous, the preferred style of Herodotus, and the periodic, of Isocrates, categories that may be added to all the others that Aristotle presented to the world in the days when the rhetoricians were still naming their tools and regarded their craft as a science and not a sport. 'Purity' and 'propriety' are labels that he devised, and he has much to say on antithesis, true and false. The excesses of Gorgianic prose he, like all the saner Greeks, condemned as a puerile fashion, and it is to Isocrates that he turns most often for illustrations, ignoring, curiously enough, Demosthenes, the master of eloquence, whether from Macedonian prejudice, or because, as is more likely, he preferred a less forcible style of oratory. He concludes by giving the

formal divisions of a speech, exordium, narrative, proofs, and peroration, with certain devices to outwit the opponent and the recommendation of jokes in season, irony being preferred as 'more gentlemanly.'

As early as the sixteenth century it was recognized that the *Rhetoric to Alexander*, which has come down under the name of Aristotle, should rather be ascribed to Anaximenes of Lampsacus, the fourth-century historian from whom Quintilian quotes a passage that can be identified (though not absolutely) in the *Rhetoric to Alexander*. The tract, which deals with the practical art of oratory, exists in fragments. In tendency it is independent of Aristotle and may even have been published earlier than his *Rhetoric*.[1]

The Letters

Aristotle had the reputation of a good letter writer, one who knew how long to make a letter, what topics were suitable, what should be the epistolary manner.[2] But we have only fragments of his *Letters*, and their genuineness is not beyond question.

The Poems

The treachery of Memnon of Rhodes which destroyed his friend Hermeias, and the virtues of his patron of Atarneus, inspired Aristotle to compose an epigram, an elegiac quatrain to be inscribed on the statue of Hermeias at Delphi. The fragment of an elegy *To Eudemus* is worth notice because it contains the praises of Plato, as one 'whom it is not permitted that bad men should even admire.' But the most important extant poem is the choral song in memory of Hermeias, commonly called *To Virtue*.[3] This has been called in turn a hymn, an ode, a paean, a scolion, and is not easily to be included in any of these categories. It was, however, choral, was sung at banquets, and is perhaps, as Reitzenstein thinks,[4] simply an unusual

[1] Ed. Spengel, Leipzig, 1847. Usener, *Quaestiones Anaximeneae*, Göttingen, 1856. Ipfelkofer, *Die Rhetorik des Anaximenes*, Wurzburg, 1889. Susemihl and Navarre reject the ascription to Anaximenes.

[2] Demetrius, *On Style* 230 ff.

[3] Bergk, *fr.* 6.

[4] *Epigramm, u. Skolion* 42.

type of scolion, nearly related to the paean. The meter is dactylo-epitritic. In these fifteen verses Aristotle sings in a strain that recalls Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*, the austere charms of Virtue, in whose name Heracles and the Heavenly Twins were proud to toil, and Achilles and Ajax to go down to Hades. With these great names he linked the 'nursling of Atarneus,' his friend, whose pursuit of Virtue lost him life, but gained him the glory of a deathless memory.

Aristotle is "the Master of those who know."[1] Dante wrote his famous phrase at a time when the authority of Aristotle was predominant, in that period of scholasticism before the dawn of the Renaissance revealed once again to the learned world the wisdom of Plato. To the schoolmen of all Europe, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Aristotle was an infallible guide. In him they found knowledge systematized, the forms of thought fixed, the language of science set forth in words and phrases which have remained to this day in use as he coined them. He was a polymath, an encyclopaedist as indefatigable, as insatiable in the collection of facts, as the hardest worker among those who were, a little later, the pride of Alexandria. But he was not a mere polymath, as were so many of the Alexandrians. On all that material which he had gathered with a pedant's industry he brought reason to bear, so that with him learning turned to wisdom; he is the first scientific statistician. Even where his scientific conclusions were false and, as in some instances, a retrogression from the ground already won, his method is masterly. To discuss, to define, was his passion; to organize, to formulate existing knowledge, his ambition. Theorizing was, he thought, the most delightful of all activities, if one pursued it for its own sake, apart from all question of practical utility, and though he was rarely eloquent, and betrayed little of that emotional fervor which fascinates the reader of Plato, he can rise to enthusiasm in speaking of the life of the speculative philosopher.[2] Consistently, therefore, he conceived of God as absorbed in contemplation that

[1] Dante, *Inferno*, canto 4.

[2] *Ethics* 10. 7.

has no relation to the universe, not, like Plato's God, a creative power that seeks to assimilate all things to himself: *Now if political and military activities are conspicuous among good activities for their beauty and grandeur, but are incompatible with leisure and are not chosen for their own sakes, but aim at an end beyond them, and if the activity of intellect which is speculative seems to surpass them in seriousness and not to aim at any end beyond itself and to have a pleasure that is all its own, . . . if this is so, I say it is evident that it is in this activity that we shall find self-sufficiency and the possibility of leisure and such freedom from weariness as is possible to man. Here, then, we have the perfect happiness of man. . . . It is not in so far as he is a man that he will be able to live this life, but only so far as he has a divine element in him. . . . The activity of God which excels all others in blessedness, will be speculative.*[1]

Aristotle anticipated no modern theory of physics or astronomy, and fell behind such a thinker as Democritus, in comparison with whom he may be called superficial in this field. In anatomy and descriptive zoölogy he was a close and accurate observer, making genuine discoveries, and arriving at conclusions that are valid today. He was, in fact, the creator of Natural History.[2]

Aristotle aimed at covering the whole field of human interests and despised no detail, thinking that every manifestation of human intelligence was important for the understanding of the whole.

[1] *Ethics* 10. 7. 7–8. Burnet's translation.

[2] Osborn in *From the Greeks to Darwin* has collected certain passages from Aristotle to prove that "he had substantially the modern conception of the Evolution of life from a primordial, soft mass of living matter to the most perfect forms, and that even in these he believed Evolution was incomplete, for they were progressing to higher forms. His argument of the analogy between the operation of natural law, rather than of chance, in the lifeless and in the living world, is a perfectly logical one, and his consequent rejection of the hypothesis of the survival of the fittest a sound deduction from his own limited knowledge of nature. It seems perfectly clear that he placed all under secondary natural laws. If he had accepted Empedocles' hypothesis, he would have been the literal prophet of Darwinism."

Theatrical records (*didascaliae*), Homeric problems, zoölogy, physics, metaphysics, ethics, politics, rhetoric, and literary criticism in turn absorbed his energies, and, above all, logic,[1] the indispensable instrument of reasoning on all these. Experiment and induction he recognized as the only method of scientific research.

His conception of life is less sympathetic to us than Plato's, because, while he lifts us to no exalted heights, he fails to impress us with his comfortable but not illuminating doctrine that virtue is a mean between two extremes. No moral enthusiasm lights up his pages. The spirit of the ethical reformer which had produced the practical philosophy of Plato was not Aristotle's. To reorganize human life was not his ambition. But to make canons and categories, to bring into order all the accumulated works of the Greek genius, to show himself for all time the master of methodical thinking and knowing, this was the task of his life and in this he succeeded.

Without the evidence of the more popular treatises it is impossible to be fair to his style. To us he seems to write most in character when he uses the purely scientific expository manner. We have not his Dialogues, that 'golden stream of speech' admired by Cicero. In the single extant work intended for the general reader, the *Constitution of Athens*, his style is severe, unadorned with poetic words, and lucid, an epithet that cannot be applied to large portions of the more scientific works as we have them. For the Gorgianic manner of writing he has only ridicule.[2] But he owed much to Isocrates, and it is probable that, could we recover more of his popular treatises, we should find in them some approximation to the Isocratic style.[3]

Style

Of his commentators the most important flourished in the second and third centuries A.D. Alexander Aphrodisias was a Carian who came to Athens about 198 A.D. We have his commentaries on the *Analytics*, the *Topics*, and the *Metaphysics*, as

[1] The word itself is, however, later than Aristotle.

[2] *Rhetoric* 3. 1.

[3] Cp. Cicero, *Orator* 62, Aristoteles Isocratem ipsum lacessivit.

well as some minor independent treatises. At the Renaissance, his works were translated into Latin. In the sixth century A.D. lived SIMPLICIUS of Cilicia, a pupil of Damascius the Neo-Platonist. He left Athens in 529 when the Academy was closed by the edict of Justinian. His commentaries, *On the Categories*, *On the Physics*, etc., are extant, and are especially valuable for the quotations of the earlier philosophers. His *Manual* on Epictetus is, says Gibbon, "preserved in the library of nations as a classic book."

Aristotle's commentators

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CHAPTER XXII

ALEXANDRIAN LITERATURE

It was far more than her political independence that Alexander took from Athens. When he founded Alexandria in 331, he perhaps hoped that, in that Oriental city, remote from the petty jealousies of the Greek states, the Hellenic spirit would find a wider field than in the narrow confines of the Athens that he had humiliated. In Alexandria were to be fresh literary triumphs, forever associated with his name. And some part of this ambition he achieved. When, at his death, in 323, his empire was divided, one of his generals, Ptolemy Soter, became king of Egypt. Had the tastes of this first Ptolemy been simply those of a military adventurer, Alexandria might never have become the center of the literary life of the next century and a half. Under his rule she rose to be the greatest commercial city of the world. But he had still higher ambitions for his capital. Following the traditions of Hipparchus of Athens, Hiero of Syracuse, and his own royal countryman Archelaus of Macedon, Ptolemy invited to his court the most distinguished writers and artists of the day. Menander he could not persuade to leave Athens, but among those who accepted his patronage were Philetas of Cos the founder of Alexandrian elegy, Euclid the geometer, Stilpo of Megara the philosopher, and Zenodotus of Ephesus the grammarian. To make the attractions of Alexandria for men of letters more permanent, he did what was hardly possible for the patrons of literature in the days of the creative writers. He began to make that collection of books which was to grow speedily into the great Library of Alexandria, and enshrined it in an academy whose handsome buildings and grounds

were assigned as luxurious quarters for the most favored men of letters. The expansion of the Library, and the studies that were inspired by this unique collection were the central interest of the Museum, as this temple of the Muses was called. One Ptolemy after another added to the Library, and when it was burnt, in 47 B.C., it is said to have contained 700,000 volumes. Zenodotus, whose specialty was Homeric criticism, was the first librarian, and each in his turn, Callimachus, Eratosthenes, Apollonius of Rhodes, Aristophanes of Byzantium, and Aristarchus took over this great trust, became the head of the learned community, and contributed critical and philological studies of the treasures under his care.

This was not an atmosphere from which was to be expected great poetry, the poetry that speaks with a common voice to men. Great learning and technical facility the Alexandrian poets acquired, but among them all Theocritus stands out conspicuous as one who sings because he must; the others sing because they can. They are destined to illustrate for all time the dangers of writing for a *coterie* rather than for the entertainment of mankind in general. Even in their own day, they had to face the ridicule that always attacks a clique. *Many are fattened in crowded Egypt,* says Timon of Phlius,[1] *scribblers on papyrus, endlessly squabbling in the bird coop of the Muses.*

Callimachus

CALLIMACHUS was born (*circa* 310 B.C.) in Cyrene, the modern vilayet of Barka, a Dorian colony on the coast of Africa which had been founded by his ancestor Battus of Thera, in the seventh century. His descent from Battus was a fact that Callimachus allowed no one to forget, and the Latin poets kept up the tradition. For Catullus, who translated and imitated him, Callimachus is 'Battiades,' so that, like Pindar, this Alexandrian librarian secured some measure of the respect always paid to a Dorian aristocrat. It seems likely that from Cyrene he went to study at Athens, and began his career as a school master in a suburb of Alexandria. About 280 he attracted the notice of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and thereafter spent his life in the

[1] 230 B.C.

shadow of the great Library, where he is supposed to have succeeded Zenodotus as librarian. He died about 240. As a poet, prose writer, philologist, librarian, and arbiter of literary taste, he is the most complete representative of the kind of talent and industry which have given the epithet 'Alexandrian' its associations in literature. Among his prose works, which have all disappeared, was a huge handbook, a bibliography with notes, which was something between a library catalogue and a history of literature. But it was by his poems that he rose into notice, and by them he survives. His tragedies have gone the way of his prose.

'If you want,' says Martial, writing about 95 A.D. to a friend, 'to read something that has no relation to real life and the men and manners of your own time, I recommend the *Causes* of Callimachus.'[1] But this was a criticism of the legends that Callimachus had chosen, rather than of the tone or manner of the poem. It was in the *Causes* that Callimachus displayed his sentimental side. 'Avoid the sentimental poets like myself and Callimachus,' says Ovid in his *Cure for Love-sickness*.[2] Here we may suppose that he referred to the *Causes* (Αἴτια). It was a collection of romantic tales in elegiac verse, chosen by Callimachus from the less familiar legends, according to the practice of this well-read poet, who avoided, as far as possible, the themes of his classic predecessors. The fragments, brief quotations by grammarians, defy every attempt to reconstruct the poem. We know that it was in four Books, and that the mythical allusions were as enigmatic as Callimachus could make them. The Latin elegists found in the *Causes* a store of sentimental situations, and were far from underrating their model. Here and there, however, their praise is faint to our ears, as when Ovid says that Callimachus made up in craftsmanship what he lacked in genius. One virtue we may assume for this elegy. It was short, or at least the separate tales were short. The nearest literary parallel for this didactic poem must have been the *Lyde* of Antimachus, an Alexandrian born before his season. But Callimachus detested Antimachus and all his

The Causes

[1] *Epigrams* 10. 4.

[2] 757 ff.

works, chiefly because of their length, a fault that he no doubt avoided for himself. Lacking this elegy, we can hardly give Callimachus his right place as a poet. But tradition, the favorable remark of Quintilian, and the frank imitations of the Latin poets have secured him the first rank among Alexandrian elegists. The romantic tale of the love of Acontius and Cydippe was told in the *Causes* and inspired Ovid with two of his imaginary love letters.[1] The story of these lovers, their first meeting at a Delian festival, their separation and reunion, reminds one of the New Comedy plots and indicates the beginning of the Greek romances. It was used again in the sixth Christian century by Aristaenetus when he wrote his imaginary letters, using precisely the method of the modern novelist who throws his tale into the epistolary form.

The Lock

The *Lock of Berenice's Hair*, in elegiacs, was translated by Catullus and may be judged from his version,[2] if it be fair to estimate any poem from a translation. Like Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, than which nothing could be more Alexandrian in spirit, it is mock heroic, the tale of the apotheosis of the lock which Berenice vowed as a thank offering for the safe return of her husband Ptolemy from the war. Pope himself did not write with a lighter irony than this pedantic poet of the Alexandrian court. As we have the poem in Catullus, it is a clever piece of raillery, where we should have looked for mere flattery and a display of erudition.

The Ibis

The lost *Ibis* was a short satiric elegy directed against Apollonius of Rhodes, one of the missiles in their famous quarrel. Ovid when he wished to attack an enemy, a Roman informer, borrowed the title of his *Ibis* from Callimachus, and probably imitated many of the details of his Greek model.

Of the six extant *Hymns*, the fifth, the *Bath of Pallas*, is in elegiacs, and, but that the categories of the Alexandrians are elastic, could hardly be separated from the elegies. In this poem of 142 verses, written in the Doric dialect, perhaps for some Argive festival, Callimachus describes how the young Teiresias came upon

[1] *Heroides* 20. 21. [2] 68.

Athene as she bathed in the waters of Helicon, and how for this offense the goddess took away his sight, but gave him the gift of soothsaying. Ovid imitated this *Hymn* in the *Metamorphoses*.[1] The *Hymn to Zeus* describes the birth of the god in Arcadia, with all the attendant miracles. But Callimachus comes round in the end to the praise of Ptolemy, much as Pindar might in an ode. The truth is that the chance to flatter Ptolemy and to display his own erudition was more to Callimachus than all the gods on Olympus. It was Apollo, said Callimachus, who inspired Battus to found his native Cyrene, and in his *Hymn to Apollo*, an imitation of the Homeric *Hymn to the Delian Apollo*, he inserts a panegyric of this most beautiful of all the Greek colonies. At the close he cannot resist a sneer at his rival Apollonius, who was probably at the moment peculiarly aggressive or successful. The *Hymns To Artemis* and *To Delos* are the longest in the collection. The latter was for a competition of rhapsodes at Delos, and echoes the Theocritean panegyric of Ptolemy in the *Seventeenth Idyl* of Theocritus. The sixth, *To Demeter*, is in the Doric dialect, and was perhaps composed for a Dorian Thesmophoria. The legend chosen by Callimachus from the Demeter myth was one which Ovid, following the *Hymn*, echoes in the *Metamorphoses*.[2] This is the story of the impious Erysichthon, who, having cut down a grove sacred to Demeter, was punished by a monstrous hunger that grew by what it devoured. In the first four *Hymns*, Callimachus employed the dialect of the Homeric poems.

The Hymns

Sixty-three epigrams of Callimachus are preserved in the *Palatine Anthology*. They include epitaphs, dedications, descriptions of books, and amatory verses. Here too, as in the *Hymns*, we have the echo of his literary quarrels. *I detest . . . I dislike . . . I loathe . . .*, he says within four lines, condemning, together with those who would write epic like Apollonius, all the hackneyed themes of poetry, all in fact that he could not call his very own. The desperate desire to be original, in spite of his times, gives even this epigram a note of pathos. But, like

The Epigrams

[1] 3. 143 ff. The tale is told again in Tennyson's *Tiresias*. [2] 8. 741 ff.

other poets of the *Anthology*, he was at his best in the epigrams written for epitaphs, or expressing the sorrow of death. Such are the six elegiac verses in memory of his friend, the poet of Halicarnassus: —

They told me, Heracleitus, they told me you were dead,
They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears to shed.
I wept as I remembered how often you and I
Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky.
And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,
A handful of gray ashes, long, long ago at rest,
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales, awake;
For Death, he taketh all away, but them he cannot take.[1]

Among the numerous inscriptions for the shipwrecked in the *Anthology* few are more pathetic than this quatrain written for the empty tomb of the drowned Sopolis: *O that swift ships had never been! Then we should not have to weep for Sopolis, son of Diocleides. But now his dead body drifts in the sea, and we can only visit an empty tomb and read his name.*[2] To Martial,[3] Callimachus represented the best that could be achieved by the Greek epigrammatists, and it is in the *Epigrams* that we, who know the *Causes* only by its rather ominous title, must look for the perfections of his 'chased' style, the exquisite finish that made his faultlessness seem almost genius. Here, too, is that pungency with sweetness, the saving touch of acid in the honey, which Meleager found in the 'myrtle berry of Callimachus' that he wove into his *Garland of Poets*. The regular meter of the Greek epigram, the elegiac couplet, is used for almost all these epigrams. Some were perhaps written, as Reitzenstein suggests, for the entertainment of the dinner table, and may be classed as sympotic epigrams.

The latest work of Callimachus was the *Hecale*, the miniature epic which was doubtless written to show the admirers of Antimachus and Apollonius what should be the limit of Alexandrian

[1] *Anth. Pal.* 7. 80; Cory's translation.
[2] *Anth. Pal.* 7. 271.
[3] *Epigrams* 4. 33.

ambition. They who had called his inspiration asthmatic were to see in the *Hecale* the golden mean. Before 1893 we had only thirty insignificant fragments of this model epic. In that year was published an extract of about fifty verses from a wooden tablet of the fourth Christian century. This was found in the Fayoûm, and published by Gomperz as an installment of the *Papyri Rainer*.[1] From this fragment it is calculated that the length of the poem was about 500 verses, a good deal longer, that is, than the *Little Epics* of Theocritus. Callimachus emphasized the fact that this is a *genre* epic when he gave it the name, not of Theseus whose victory over the Marathonian bull is described, but of the old peasant woman, Hecale, who entertained the hero in her poor hut on the eve of the encounter. The poem described the vigil of Theseus and his humble hostess, her anxiety for his fate, the victory, and the pathetic contrast of the moment when, as he returns with a triumphant following, he meets the funeral procession of his friend, who has died in the hour of his success. Of all this the recovered fragments give us broken glimpses, enough to show how Callimachus indulged his passion for erudite narrative and the obscurer legends. The soliloquy that comes first in the extract seems to be uttered by a crow which relates a scandalous story of Athene ; then we have the garrulous but effective speech of an old man who comes at dawn to wake his neighbor, and about fifteen lines describing the triumph of Theseus and the exultation of the people of Marathon at the capture of the monster. It was from the *Hecale* that Ovid drew for his tale of the peasants Philemon and Baucis who entertained Zeus and Hermes.[2]

The Hecale

Callimachus loved archaic or unusual words, strange epithets, like 'Rhamnusian' Helen. Everywhere, except in the pathetic epigrams, his erudition shows through. He will always point the moral of the danger of too much learning in a poet of mere talent. But his saying that a big book is a big nuisance, and his sneers at the misguided Alexandrians who felt inspired to write long epics

[1] Vienna, 1893. [2] *Met.* 8. 620 ff.

were a real service to literature. In spite of the loss of the *Causes*, we can trace in Ovid and Catullus what they never sought to conceal, and Catullus admitted, close imitations and translations of the poems of 'Battiades.' Even Vergil borrowed from him.[1] 'These singers of Euphorion,' says Cicero, in his contempt for the poets of his day who imitated the Alexandrians. But the 'singers of Callimachus' were proud to follow in the steps of this greatest of all his tribe. He left little untried, experimenting in all the meters, even galliambics, and it seems likely that the galliambic poem of Catullus to Cybele (63) was imitated or translated from a model by Callimachus.

I hate a cyclic poem, said Callimachus, implying by the epithet that any long epic in imitation of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* must have all the conventions, the formulae, the well-worn manner of the cyclic type. His sneers at those who fancied themselves equal to a long epic must have nipped in the bud many an aspiring poet, and increased the number of brief learned epics. Such were the epic poems of EUPHORION of Chalcis, the librarian of King Antiochus, the Seleucid. He was admired and translated by the Latin poets, whose preference for this inferior Alexandrian shocked Cicero's surer taste. Sainte-Beuve, as he reflected on the *bizarrerie de la gloire* which has made so many 'gracious and tender' Alexandrians seem the idle singers of an empty day, took Euphorion for the typical figure among all those lost poets, more unfortunate than the rest in that he perished twice, once by the loss of his own poems, and again by the disappearance of the works of Vergil's friend Gallus, who imitated him.

Euphorion

But Callimachus did not persuade all the poets of his circle to cut down their epics to the measure of his own *Hecale*. RHIANUS of Crete, whose literary career was spent in Alexandria, wrote a long and ambitious epic, the *Messenians*, the tale of that struggle between Messenia and Sparta which had inspired the marching songs of Tyrtaeus, "battle odes whose lines are steel and fire." The hero of the epic of Rhianus was the

Rhianus

[1] Cp. *Aen.* 8. 416 ff. with the *Hymn to Artemis* 51 ff.

Messenian patriot Aristomenes, who led his countrymen in their heroic effort to throw off the heavy yoke of Sparta. It was a forlorn hope, since the gods themselves and the decrees of fate, as Rhianus admitted, were on the side of the heavier battalions of Sparta. We have only a few lines of the *Messenians*, and for the course of events described must turn to the *résumé* given by Pausanias in the fourth Book of his *Tour of Greece*.

But the real mutineer against the restrictions of Callimachus was his younger contemporary and pupil, Apollonius of Rhodes. The epithet 'the Rhodian,' which he has retained through so many centuries, was adopted by himself as a slight to Alexandria, which was probably his birthplace, and it reminds his readers, as he meant that it should, that a poet who was long without honor in his own country had been made welcome at Rhodes. He had ventured, while still a youth, and in defiance of the rules laid down by Callimachus, to write an epic, the *Argonautica* (*Tales of the Argonauts*). When he recited portions of his poem before the poets and philologists of the Alexandrian Museum, it was unfinished, but already betrayed by its ample outlines that its scope far exceeded the limits accepted by the majority of his hearers. Perhaps he hoped to convert them by showing that long poems could still be written by a man of genius. But his verses were received with ridicule by that company of jealous pedants, and he withdrew to Rhodes, where he was at once applauded, both as poet and professor. There he devoted many years to revising and completing the *Argonautica*. Callimachus was the most powerful and most hostile of his critics, and kept up the feud, one of the bitterest in literature, by his satire, the *Ibis*, while Apollonius contributed an epigram on the elegies of Callimachus, written in the most spirited style of philological controversy.[1] In the course of time Callimachus and his successor Eratosthenes died. Alexandria had come to admit the greatness of Apollonius, and he was invited to take the vacant post of librarian, and so became the head of the school where he

Apollonius of Rhodes

[1] *Anth. Pal.* 11. 275.

had been checked and humiliated. He died at Alexandria about 190 B.C.

The legend of the Argonauts was, from the first, one of the most popular tales of Greece, second in interest only to the Trojan and Theban sagas, and had been handled by every distinguished poet after Homer. In the *Fourth Pythian* Pindar had sketched the story in splendid outlines, and with the reserve of the lyric manner. Of the heroes who ventured on that quest of the Golden Fleece he named only twelve. The indefatigable Apollonius gives us a list of fifty-five, with extracts from their family history, an opportunity not to be missed by an Alexandrian well read in the obscurer legends. That unwillingness to leave out, which meets the reader at the opening of the poem, was, from first to last, the striking weakness of Apollonius. He lived in an age when to be well informed was the first duty of a poet, and not to display one's erudition was eccentric, a waste of talent. His *Argonautica* consists of about six thousand verses, less than half the *Iliad*. It is written in four Books. The first describes the assembling of the heroes on the beach of Pagasae in Thessaly, where the Argo had been built. There, before they slept, Orpheus sang, to enchant them, a song which was the model of the ode of Silenus described in Vergil's *Sixth Eclogue*, the story of the beginning of the world and of those early old gods who ruled when Zeus was still a child in his Cretan cave, one of those theogonies which were the delight of primitive Greece: *And now the lyre ceased, but still were their heads strained forward to listen with eager ears, and they were motionless under his spell.*[1] Next morning they launched the Argo. The chief episodes of their first stage are the halt at Lemnos and the drowning of Hylas in Mysia. In describing the latter, Apollonius clearly echoes the more celebrated and more beautiful version in Theocritus. In Mysia the Argonauts lose Heracles, who will not abandon his search for Hylas. The second Book is crowded with the adventures of the voyage, such as the boxing match of Polydeuces and the episode of

The Argonautica

[1] *Argonautica* I. 513 ff.

Phineus, one of the famous "prophets old" of Milton's verse. He had betrayed to men the sacred purpose of Zeus, and was punished by endless old age and the constant persecution of the foul harpies. For the Argonauts, Phineus plays the part of Teiresias in the *Odyssey*, and tells them of dangers to come, the clashing rocks as they enter the Pontus, and, that sea once reached, all the itinerary of its mysterious coast till they shall come to the mouth of the Phasis, the goal of all their travel. The issue of all these toils is to be wrought by Aphrodite, the first hint of the rôle of Medea. In their course they come to the palace of Lycus, the Mariandynian king, and to him Jason tells the tale of the voyage, a reminiscence of the device in the *Odyssey*, adopted later by Vergil. On the isle of Ares they rescue the shipwrecked sons of Phrixus, the grandchildren of Aeetes, the nephews of Medea. These become their guides, and so at last they reach the cliffs of frosty Caucasus and hear the bitter cry of Prometheus in torment. So far the Muse of History has had the upper hand. But for his third Book Apollonius calls on Erato, the Muse of Erotic Poetry, and now Medea's passion for the adventurer Jason becomes the main theme. She is not the baleful sorceress of the tragedy of Euripides, but a love-sick girl who trembles and weeps tears of pity for Jason's danger. Even then, however, she had won a reputation for magic arts as the pupil of Hecate, and was regarded by the Colchians as *one who can quench raging fires and check the flow of rivers, and make the moon and stars stand still.*[1] Easy enough was it for her to save Jason with her most potent drug, the sap of a plant sprung from the blood of Prometheus. Apollonius describes every phase of her doubts and anguish of mind in that choice between her father and this stranger with whom so far she had exchanged no word, though his voice was ever in her ears, and his least gesture as he had appeared in the halls of Aeetes: —

As when on the walls of a dwelling the leaping sunbeams play
Flung up from the water that into a caldron but now fell plashing,
Or into a pail, and hither and thither the sunbeam flashing

[1] 3. 530 ff.

In lightning eddy and flicker is dancing in mad unrest,
So quivered and fluttered the heart within the maiden's breast.[1]

Vergil imitates this passage in describing the doubts of Aeneas, and the whole episode in his picture of the growth of Dido's passion for just such a hero as Jason. With Medea there is no real doubt of the issue. She 'sees the better and her heart approves it, but chooses the worse.' The words in which Ovid has made her describe her choice have passed into a proverb.[2]

In her interview with Jason there are admirable speeches by Medea, as she betrays, by degrees, her passion, and at last draws expressions of emotion even from Jason, who must have been the typical laggard lover of antiquity till he was surpassed by the frigid Aeneas. The third Book makes the fortune of the poem. It closes with a fine description of Jason's victory over the brazen bulls, and the terrible slaughter of the Earth-born, who sprang from the dragon's teeth to be mown down by his charmed sword. The fourth Book tells the tale of Medea's flight from the palace to the Argo, Jason's theft, with her aid, of the Golden Fleece, their escape, the pursuit by the Colchians, and the cruel murder of Medea's brother Absyrtus by the treachery of his sister who now takes on something of her sinister character. But after they leave Colchis the interest falls off, and there is more erudition than poetry in the tale of that strange and labyrinthine return voyage up the Danube, into the river Po and so to the Sicilian sea.

The real heroine of this romantic epic is Medea of the golden eyes.[3] Jason's is a thankless rôle, and his quest is subordinated in true Alexandrian fashion to the love interest. The whole is a fairy tale crowded with all the marvels that could be imagined for a mythical voyage in strange Eastern seas. It is an epic of details. At every point the Muses inspire Apollonius to clear up the obscure traditions of the founding of some small town at which the heroes touch, or to tell a myth such as that which accounts for the Etesian

[1] 3. 755 ff. Way's translation.
[2] *Met.* 7. 20–21: video meliora, proboque, Deteriora sequor.
[3] 4. 726.

winds by which the heroes are detained on the Thynian coast. The scholarly note is always included in the text of the poem, so that an incident often seems to be dragged in chiefly for the sake of the historical comment. But even the oppression of detail, the loss of the heroic outline, the trivial elegancies, the polite deities with their highly conventional part in the intrigues, cannot obscure the beauties of the third Book, and if we judge Apollonius by his best, he was a true poet. Quintilian said of the *Argonautica* that it was written with a mediocrity below which Apollonius did not fall. Too much of it is merely interesting, an epithet never applied to the best creative work. But Apollonius can rise above his general level, and next to the poems of Theocritus his *Argonautica* is the most considerable performance of the Alexandrians. He wrote other epics which have not survived. Ovid and Vergil are deeply in his debt, and Catullus echoes him in several passages of the best known of his longer poems.[1]

Hostile as he was to heroic epic imitative of Homer, Callimachus did not disdain the didactic type, and though he had little flattery to spare for contemporary poets, there was one of his circle for whom he has only words of praise. This was ARATUS of Soli in Cilicia, the friend of Theocritus, whose masterpiece, the *Phaenomena*, Callimachus describes in an epigram as written in the very manner of Hesiod.[2] In this he showed the partiality of a friend. Aratus did indeed aspire to be the Hesiod of Alexandria, as Apollonius desired to be its Homer. His work was a poetic version, in 1154 hexameters, of the prose treatise of the learned Eudoxus. It was in two Books, the first astronomical, the second meteorological dealing with the signs of weather; for this part he seems to have borrowed from Theophrastus. The Greek poets of the best period rejected the didactic style, leaving to prose writers the mere conveyance of facts which could not be adorned by the imagination and by human sympathy. But here was the opportunity of Alexandria, in an age when erudition sought an outlet and all desired to be well informed. Aratus had

Aratus

[1] 64. [2] *Anth. Pal.* 9. 507.

not the genius needed to make his poem a possession forever. The *Phaenomena* fortunately survives, and we can compare it with Vergil's *Georgics* and see how a genuine poet could give such a theme human interest, by the power of imagination and the magic of style. Aratus was a favorite with the Romans[1] and was translated by Cicero, Varro, and Germanicus. Though he was, no doubt, regarded by the Alexandrians as one of themselves, he spent the greater part of his literary life at the court of Antigonus of Macedon, at Pella, where he died about 245 B.C.

Every date in the life of THEOCRITUS is a matter of guesswork. According to the most likely conjecture, he was born about 315 B.C.,[2] at Syracuse. Cos, the Dorian island, though it lay so far from Alexandria, was the favorite retreat of the Ptolemies, their Capri, where they went to recruit and to throw off the affairs of state. There lived the tutor of Ptolemy II (Philadelphus), the poet Philetas,[3] very famous in his day as a writer of elegy. To Cos Theocritus went in early youth, and studied under Philetas, to whom he paid a deferential compliment in his *Seventh Idyl*. But of his personality and circumstances we know hardly anything definite. He must have spent some time in Alexandria under the patronage of Ptolemy, since he wrote in his honor the *Seventeenth Idyl*, a panegyric expressed in language perfectly appropriate from a court poet to a king who asserted the divinity of his parents, and had *set up their images, made beautiful with gold and ivory, to be the helpers of men on earth*. The poem, with its invocation to Zeus, whose name recurs at the close, flatters its subject by its likeness to a Homeric Hymn. That Theocritus knew Southern Italy and the hills and streams about Sybaris seems probable from the *Fourth* and *Fifth Idyls* whose scenes are laid there. If he had not spent some part of his poetic career at Syracuse, he would hardly have written

Theocritus

[1] Cp. Vergil, *Georgics* 1. 356 ff. with *Phaenomena* 909 ff.

[2] Susemihl proposes 315 B.C., Legrand 305, Hauler, and Helm 305–300.

[3] According to Crönert in *Hermes* 37, Philitas is the correct form. As an elegiac poet Philetas ranked next after Callimachus: Quintilian 10. 58.

the *Sixteenth Idyl* in praise of Hiero II, an undisguised request, in terms that do not suggest a prosperous poet, for the same patronage that, in the fifth century, had been bestowed on Simonides by the great Hiero. The date of the poem was perhaps 274, more probably a decade later.[1]

Of the thirty *Idyls* that have come down to us several are rejected outright by the editors, and others are not free from suspicion. The bucolic or pastoral *Idyls* (εἰδύλλιον = little poem) are the most typical of the genius of Theocritus. But in the traditional arrangement of his poems they are not sorted out from the rest, nor is there any attempt at chronological order. Under the general title *Idyls* are included the pastoral poems, the *Mimes*, the *Little Epics*, the *Encomia*, and the Aeolic songs.

Before Theocritus pastoral poetry as a literary type did not exist. Every extant Greek poem, where such a sentiment would be in place, expressed the Greek sense of the charm of country life with its abundance of food and wine and the repose that sweetens the season of outdoor work. Even the city-bred Aristophanes, when he advertised the joys of peace, painted her "sitting under her olive." But before Theocritus, no Greek poet, as far as we know, realized the literary value of the rude poetry of the shepherds, the *Volkslieder* of pastoral life. That such a poet should be a Sicilian was natural, since in Sicily more than elsewhere he would insensibly achieve an intimacy with the life of the field and fold, with the business of the hillsides, and all the joys and griefs of the oldest and most natural of human callings. The material lay ready to his hand in the songs which the Sicilian shepherds sang on their feast days, improvising them as a rule, so that they were humorous or pathetic according to the temperament of the untutored poet. Such is the Phrygian *Lityerses Song* of the *Tenth Idyl* of Theocritus, or, in the *Seventh Idyl*, the song that Lycidas had 'fashioned on the hillside.' From these sources Theocritus drew the *motifs* that after him were used by all poets of pastoral, the conventions and commonplaces of the singing match, the refrain, the carved

[1] Beloch.

bowl or lamb as prizes; the lament of the shepherd crossed in love; the lover who carves the name of his mistress on a tree or sends her presents of roses, doves, apples, or locks of hair; the dirge for the dead shepherd whom all nature laments; the lover to whom the defects of his mistress seem beauties; all these Theocritus made his own, so that the Sicilian Muses are forever the divinities of pastoral song, and, in spite of Vergil, it was not Dorian Arcadia but Dorian Sicily that became the Arcady of the poets.

The most pathetic and the most fruitful for later poetry of all the themes that Theocritus found current among the Sicilian peasantry was the story of the love and death of Daphnis. The country people who sang of this hero of pastoral poetry perhaps symbolized in his early death the quickly fading beauty of spring. In the *Eighth Idyl* Theocritus, if the poem be his, sang of the first victory of Daphnis, when he vanquished Menalcas in alternate song; in the *Sixth* he is again the young and invincible shepherd poet. But, in the *First*, Thyrsis sings of the proverbial sorrows and death of this victim of Aphrodite, who, like Hippolytus, appeals with his last breath from Love who has worked his ruin to his own protecting god, Pan, the god of shepherds. The invocation of Thyrsis to the nymphs: *Where were ye Nymphs, where were ye when Daphnis drooped and died?* has been closely imitated in a long series of dirges, by Vergil[1] in his lament for Gallus, by Milton in *Lycidas*, by Pope in his artificial *Pastorals*, by Shelley in the *Adonais*. Daphnis goes down the stream lamented by all living things of the hills and woods. The reward of Thyrsis is a deep, carved bowl of ivy wood like that which Odysseus offered to the Cyclops, a bowl where

Idyl 1

> "wanton ivy twines,
> Wherein is enchased many a fair sight
> * * * * * * *
> And over them spread a goodly wild vine."[2]

[1] *Eclogue* 10.

[2] Spenser, *Shepherd's Calendar* 8; cp. Verg., *Ecl.* 3. 36, and Pope, *Pastoral* 1.

The Sicilian legend of Polyphemus as the lover of Galatea is the theme of the *Sixth* and *Eleventh Idyls*, which Vergil echoed in the *Fifth Eclogue*. In the *Sixth* Daphnis reproaches Polyphemus with his coldness to Galatea. The Cyclops sits piping, lost in the conceit of his own charms, while she, light as thistledown,

Idyls 6 and 11

"Pursuing that that flies, and flying what pursues,"

rises from the sea to pelt his sheep with apples and his dog that runs along the shore, barking as he looks into the salt water. Damoetas gives the fatuous rejoinder of Polyphemus, which has been echoed by all the conceited shepherds of pastoral poetry.[1] But in the *Eleventh* we find the Cyclops no longer coquetting, but pining for Galatea's notice, aware now that his appearance is against him. *I fell in love with thee, maiden, on the day when first thou camest with my mother and didst wish to pluck the hyacinths from the hill, and I was thy guide on the way.*[2] This tale of love at first sight has been exquisitely imitated by Vergil in the *Eighth Eclogue*, in a passage which Voltaire and Macaulay thought the finest in Latin poetry.

The *Seventh Idyl*, the *Thalysia* (*Harvest Feast of Demeter*), which Sainte-Beuve called the 'queen of eclogues,' is a reminiscence of the life of Theocritus in Cos, and of the friendships of those youthful days when he studied under Philetas, happier, one may suppose, than in his court life. Simichidas (who is Theocritus himself, as Vergil is Tityrus and Spenser Colin Clout) and two friends are walking in the heat of noon to a harvest feast of Demeter near the river Hales. They meet Lycidas, a Cydonian of Crete — one remembers the fine, soft bloom of the Cretan grass in Sappho — clad in a rough goatskin, with eyes that smiled always, and *a laugh still on his lips*.[3] He sings

Idyl 7

[1] "Nor am I so deformed to sight, If in my scythe I looked aright In which I see my picture done." — MARVELL.

[2] Lang's translation.

[3] Legrand would identify Lycidas with Leonidas of Tarentum, the epigrammatist, a younger contemporary of Theocritus.

them a song which is a sort of *résumé* of pastoral themes, his own love for Ageanax, a brief account of the sorrows of Daphnis, and the praises of Comatas, the goatherd of Sicilian legend, who suffered imprisonment in a chest for the Muses' sake, and was miraculously fed by bees. Simichidas, in his turn, tells of the consuming love of his friend Aratus (probably not the poet of Soli). But what raises this *Idyl* above all the others that, like it, breathe of summer scents and are full of the sounds of doves and bees, is the closing picture of the feast near the altar of Demeter of the threshing-floor, in the shade of elms and poplars, where Demeter herself with "sunburnt looks," the Muse of Pastoral Poetry, stands by smiling, her hands full of corn and poppies.

The *Thalysia* has no regular amoebean song, the alternate stanzas which were characteristic of pastoral improvisations. The best example of this type, which Vergil has imitated in his *Third Eclogue*, is the *Eighth Idyl*. Here we have all the naïve etiquette of the singing match, the challenge, the agreement as to stakes and umpire, and then the alternate verses, here elegiac quatrains, closely symmetrical, in which the singer who draws the lot chooses the *motif*, the cadences and turns of thought, which he that responds must closely follow in form and try to embellish in expression. Some of the stanzas are lost, and, according to the accepted arrangement, it is Menalcas, the loser, who sings the quatrain which is the most concise and exquisite expression of Sicilian pastoral: *Nay, but beneath this rock will I sing, with thee in mine arms, and watch our flocks feeding together, and, before us, the Sicilian sea.*[1]

Idyl 8

The *Second Idyl*, the *Pharmaceutria* (*Sorceress*), is not to be classified offhand. It is a tale of town life, full of passion, and has nothing in common with the pathetic or sentimental loves of the pastoral *Idyls*. It might be classed as a 'woman's mime' with those of Sophron, but that it is a monologue, in hexameters, and a mime implies dialogue.[2] In English or

Idyl 2

[1] Lang.

[2] The scholiast who says that it was from a mime of Sophron that Theoc-

Scottish poetry it would be called a ballad, like Rossetti's *Sister Helen*, which it must have inspired. Simaetha is no Medea or Canidia with a laboratory of poisons, but a betrayed girl deserted by her lover. She has recourse to magic spells and love charms at midnight, the wryneck that turns on the wheel, the melting wax, and crackling laurel leaf: 'Even as it crackles in the flame may the flesh of Delphis waste in the burning.' When the magic rite is done and she has sent away the maid, Thestylis, she tells in the silence and moonlight the story of her love, the pain and tumult of her heart in dramatic contrast with the peace of nature. It was at a festival procession that she first saw Delphis, one of those shows that in New Comedy and its Latin imitations so often end in lovers' meetings.[1] The tale of her summons, his coming, and her emotion as he crossed the threshold adds another to those pictures of passion of which Sappho set the type. It has been most closely imitated by Racine in *Phèdre*. In the *Sorceress*, as in the dirge for Daphnis, Theocritus uses the refrain, that pathetic device dear to Alexandrian poets, which is so effective when it is not absurd. It was adopted from Alexandria by Catullus, and by Vergil for the *Eighth Eclogue*. The *Fourth Idyl* is a mime, a gossiping dialogue between Battus and Corydon, which contains no songs, is realistic, and reminds one that Comedy began in Sicily. Here we are in no perfumed Eden, but in the society of the rude and sensual country people with whom the idealized Daphnis has little in common. The *Fourteenth*, the story of the lover's quarrel of Aeschines, and the *Twenty-First*, the dream of the sea-worn fisherman, are also mimes. The latter, which is probably not Theocritean, is similar in scheme to the *Eighth Mime* of Herodas, the *Dream*.

It is to the *Fifteenth*, the *Syracusan Women*, or *Women at the*

ritus borrowed Thestylis, Simaetha's maidservant, strengthens the conjecture that the model of the *Sorceress* was in Sophron, in whose fragments there are verses evidently uttered by women preparing magic rites.

[1] Cp. Plautus, *Cistellaria* 1. 1. 89 ff. *It was the feast of Dionysus. My mother took me to see the show. As I came home I saw him.* . . . It was at a feast of Adonis that Hero first met Leander. Cp. too *Anth. Pal.* 5. 193.

Feast of Adonis that one turns for the best and most certain example, apart from Herodas, of the Greek mimes of the Sicilian type which Sophron was the first to introduce to literature. Its model was Sophron's *Women at the Isthmian Games*, one of the famous 'women's mimes.' Two Syracusan women who live in Alexandria go to see the Adonis festival given by Arsinoë, wife of Ptolemy Philadelphus. The mime must have been written before Arsinoë's death in 270. Theocritus gives us all the details of the adventure, the arrival of Gorgo at the house of her friend Praxinoa, the latter's fussy reception, her hurried toilet interrupted by her scolding of the bewildered servant, the malicious chatter of the two women about their absent husbands. At last they embark on the crowded streets, and we have a vivid impression of the crush to get good places, of the polite stranger who helps them to get inside, and the exasperated sight-seer who cannot endure the broad Doric of their endless chatter. Then a Greek singer begins the *Hymn of Adonis*, the mysterious and unhappy lover of Aphrodite, Syrian Thammuz

The Syracusan Women

> "Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
> The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
> In amorous ditties all a summer's day."

His image lies there on a silver couch, surrounded by fruits, honey, cakes made to imitate all things that fly and creep, and those quickly fading herb gardens of Adonis which were proverbial for their fragility, due to the shallow soil.[1] The hymn, which sings the advent of Adonis permitted every year a brief return to earth, was chosen by Matthew Arnold[2] as the representative religious poem of Paganism, in which there is not a particle of the comfort that springs from religious emotion, as though these decadent Alexandrians had here willfully missed their chance to console and elevate by the symbolism of this tale of resurrection.

[1] Plato, *Phaedrus* 276 B.

[2] *Essays in Criticism*, First Series, 208. Arnold translates the *Idyl.*

The hymn dwells only on the sensuous side, the appeal to eye and ear.

The *Mimes* of Theocritus were almost certainly written to be read, not acted, but that they were never put on the stage it would be rash to say, when one remembers that even the *Eclogues* of Vergil, so much less dramatic in form, were frequently performed at Rome.

The Hylas

Among the *Little Epics* the most charming is the *Thirteenth Idyl*, the *Hylas*. This is the tale of the drowning of Hylas and the bitter grief of Heracles for the loss of his favorite. It formed part of the great song of Silenus described in Vergil's *Sixth Eclogue*. Tennyson said he would be content to die if he had written anything like the passage where Heracles is on his vain quest for Hylas: *Thrice he shouted Hylas as loud as his deep throat could call, and thrice again the boy heard him, and thin came his voice from the water, and hard by though he was, he seemed very far away.*[1]

Other epic idyls are the *Twenty-Fourth* and *Twenty-Fifth* which describe the birth of Heracles, his miraculous infancy, and how he slew the Nemean lion. More than one late writer of epic tried to cover the whole Heracles myth, but these little epics are short enough to please Callimachus, mere episodes from the saga of the Dorian hero.

The Distaff

The *Twenty-Eighth Idyl* stands alone. It is in the conventional Aeolic dialect, and was written as the dedication of an ivory distaff. This was a present from Theocritus to 'dainty-ankled' Theugenis, the wife of his friend Nicias. Her husband, a physician of Miletus, was himself a poet and scholar to whom are assigned eight epigrams in the *Palatine Anthology*, the 'green mint' of Nicias.[2] The meter of the *Distaff* is choriambic.

The *Twenty-Seventh Idyl* (*Oaristys*), the 'Wooing,' is not by Theocritus, though it is found only with his poems. It is a pastoral mime written in stichomuthia, the tragic manner of dialogue

[1] Lang. Cp. Propertius I. 20.

[2] Meleager, *Garland* 19.

in which the speakers take alternate verses. Though not Theocritean it is worthy of Theocritus. In this sort of dialogue all depends on the skill with which the speakers in their game of quick rejoinder keep up the ball. This the anonymous poet of the *Oaristys* achieves with wonderful dexterity and spirit, so that the brief mime of Daphnis, the boyish lover, and the reluctant maiden whom he woos and wins is one of the most vivid of the pastorals. It has been translated by Chénier.

Between twenty and thirty epigrams of the *Palatine Anthology* are ascribed to Theocritus. Of these Ahrens allows only nine to be genuine. Theocritus would not have been an Alexandrian poet if he had not contributed his share to that collection which is the chief monument of Alexandrian taste and ingenuity. Some of his epigrams are descriptive, little pictures that might have been extracted from the *Idyls*, such as that where Daphnis, with Pan and Priapus hot on his track, lies unaware of their chase, resting his tired limbs in a cool cavern.[1] Others are for statues, as that for the statue of Archilochus,[2] and there is an epitaph[3] for the grave of Hipponax written in the Ephesian's own choliambics.

The Epigrams

Theocritus created a literary convention and gave a permanent form to a branch of poetry that had hitherto been neglected. The longest of his poems is only 280 verses. With his talent for description he might well have aspired, like Apollonius, to write an epic. But he was not burdened with erudition that he yearned to display. His was a genius that knew its limitations. Callimachus tried to be himself, and tried in vain. Theocritus, by his real independence and freshness, raised himself so far above the rest of the Alexandrian poets that when one calls him an Alexandrian, it is always with a saving clause. Yet it is hard to imagine him living in any other age. He is Alexandrian in his love of calm, the gentle melancholy that breathes through the fragments of Menander, his complete self-consciousness, his preoccupation with love, the atmosphere of an age that has lost forever the Tyrtaean note in poetry. Through Theocritus pastoral poetry will

[1] 3. [2] 19. [3] 21.

always paint the soft side of country life, and breathe of summer and that ardent Sicilian sun which gives their charms to shade and the coolness of 'Dorian water.' Italy, as Sainte-Beuve pointed out, was, in Vergil's day, a land of tillage and the hard work that goes with the drastic use of the soil. The *Georgics* is the proper idyllic poetry for Romans whose hands were too hardened by the plow to turn readily to pipe-playing. The florid *Eclogues* of Sannazzaro (1458–1530) are purely artificial. Pope, with his "florist's flowers," made pastoral absurd. He thought that to live one's life in the country was to lose it, and saw nature as one must see her from a Twickenham villa, frankly declining to have anything to do with shepherds not of the Golden Age. Spenser, as Colin Clout, at least aimed at realism. But pastoral does not flourish in a land of fogs and rain. This is illustrated by the case of Ireland. She is the most pastoral country in Europe, and in no other are the illiterate poor so given to poetic composition. Yet in a country where there is so little of the labor of tillage, so much of heavenly leisure, *otia dia*, the portion of those who spend their days in herding, there is no such thing as pastoral poetry. It can only arise under clear skies, like those that made glad the heart of the shepherd in Homer. The Irish sun shines too cold.

Dialect

The basis of the dialect of Theocritus in the *Mimes* and the pastoral *Idyls* is his native Doric, the broadest of all the Greek dialects and the most musical, with its avoidance of sibilants and the constant presence of the long "a." The *Little Epics* and the *Encomia* are Ionic, as becomes their epic themes, but with a mixture of Doric. The *Distaff* and two other poems are in conventional literary Aeolic.

Meters

All but three of the poems are in hexameters. Theocritus used the break in the fourth dactylic foot so frequently that it is known as the bucolic caesura. In the pastoral *Idyls* there is a tendency to use spondaic rhythm, in the *Little Epics* dactyls predominate.[1]

Apart from Homer there is no Greek poet whose every page is

[1] Kunst, *De heroico versu*, 1887.

so crowded with literary associations. This is, of course, partly due to Vergil's close imitations in the *Eclogues*, but more than one famous Horatian tag, more than one familiar line of Catullus was anticipated by Theocritus, while a list of the reminiscences of the *Idyls* in the English poets would fill many pages. His own debt to the earlier poets, to Philetas for example, the elegist, is naturally less evident to us. The recovery of Stesichorus, from whom Theocritus seems to have copied his *Epithalamium of Helen*, or of Sophron's *Mimes*, would light up the question of his originality, but could not weaken our impression of his genius.

Moschus

Moschus of Syracuse was a pupil of Aristarchus the critic, and himself wrote a prose work on grammar. He was that rare apparition in the Alexandrian circle of the latter part of the second century, a combination of poet and philologer. That he carried on the tradition of Theocritus we see from the eight poems and fragments that have survived. The third and longest *Idyl*, the *Lament for Bion*, is assigned to him with no great certainty. It is in hexameters and has a refrain unequally distributed: *Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.* It is the funeral song of Daphnis in a fresh form, and its pathetic prettiness inspired Shelley and Matthew Arnold to borrow from it for the *Adonais* and the *Thyrsis*. In one passage the poet rises above himself, and his verses have been, ever since, the classic model, never surpassed by its imitators, for the pathetic contrast of the seasons which are renewed, the suns that rise again, with the ephemeral lot of man to whom it is not given to "repair his drooping head": *Ah me, when the mallows wither in the garden, and the green parsley, and the curled tendrils of the anise, on a later day they live again, and spring in another year; but we men, we, the great and mighty, or wise, when once we have died, in hollow earth we sleep, gone down into silence; a right long, and endless, and unawakening sleep.*[1]

[1] Lang. Cp. Catullus 5; Hor. *Odes* 4. 7; Wordsworth, *Sonnet to the River Duddon;* Spenser, *Shepherd's Calendar:* "Whence is it that the flowret of the field doth fade? . . ."; Tasso, *Lament for Corinna:* "Cade il bianco ligustro, e poi risorge . . ."

Bion of Smyrna lived towards the end of the second century, and wrote pastoral poetry in the dialect and manner of Theocritus. Of his life we know nothing, and perhaps must not even accept as historical truth the words of the writer of the *Lament for Bion: Poison came to thy lips. . . . What mortal was so cruel as to mix poison for thee?* Bion's work, as far as we may judge from a few short poems and a number of fragments, shows a falling off from the directness and dramatic power of Theocritus. He is more rhetorical and more sentimental. His manner is at its best in the longest extant idyl (98 hexameters), the *Lament for Adonis*. Here we see how the *motifs* of the dirge of Daphnis, in Theocritus, have become commonplaces of pastoral poetry. The mountains, the rivers, the fountains, the flowers, weep or flush red with anguish for Adonis. Grief makes the young spring wild.

Bion

Herodas[1] of Cos (*circa* 300–250 B.C.) was a younger contemporary of Theocritus. The evidence for his date is in the *Mimes*, such as references to the apotheosis of Ptolemy and Arsinoë in 1; to the death, apparently recent, of Apelles the painter in 4; in 1 and 4 there are imitations of the *Fifteenth Idyl* of Theocritus which must have been written before the death of Queen Arsinoë in 270. The Cos that Herodas knew was made conspicuous by the patronage of the Ptolemies, and was the playground of unlovely Alexandria, a resort of poets and artists. Before 1891 we had only ten fragments (22 verses) of the *Mimes* of Herodas. In that year, which saw also the recovery of the Aristotelian *Constitution of Athens*, were published about 700 verses of Herodas from an Egyptian papyrus. Of these we already possessed only five, in quotations.

Herodas

These eight *Mimes*, brief dramatic dialogues, make up, to some extent, for the loss of the famous *Mimes* of Sophron, who was the acknowledged master of this literary type. Herodas, in a fragmentary prelude to the second Book of the *Mimes* (which has

[1] Herodes and Herondas are other versions of his name. The correct form is probably Ἡρῴδας (Meister).

not been recovered), asserts that he sings to the Ionians, whom he calls the Xuthidae, with a reference to the Ion legend, and that his 'limping lays' follow in the steps of the far-famed Hipponax. He uses accordingly the scazon, the choliambic meter, iambic trimeter lamed by the regular substitution of a long for a short syllable in the sixth foot. Many of the Alexandrian poets used the scazon. But as we find it in these *Mimes* it seems the most direct descendant of the scurrilous rhythm of Hipponax. Herodas and Hipponax have stamped it forever as the vulgarest of all the Greek meters, the best suited to pictures of low life, of the seamy side of the manners of the Greek *bourgeoisie*, with its coarse jests and incessant proverbs, its scolding and gossiping women.

The scene of the first *Mime*, the *Go-Between* (90 verses), is laid in a seaport, probably in Cos. Gyllis, a procuress, comes to see her friend, the grass widow Metriche, whose husband has been absent for some months in Egypt and has failed to send her letters or messages. Gyllis is employed by Gryllus, an athlete, to declare his passion for Metriche and to bribe her to betray Mandris, her husband. But Metriche, with a strength of character not displayed elsewhere in these *Mimes*, rejects the woman's advances in language worthy of Penelope herself. The third person is a maidservant, a Thracian, the Greek equivalent of the French maid. The opening verses, the greetings of the women, the scolding of the maid, which was evidently a common-place of the mime, closely resemble the first scene of the *Syracusan Women* of Theocritus, and there may have been direct imitation on the part of Herodas. On the other hand, he may have drawn directly on Sophron who had furnished the model for Theocritus. **Mime 1**

The second *Mime*, the *Pander* (109 verses), takes place in Cos. Battarus, the pander, brings an action for damages against Thales, a citizen who has attempted to carry off a courtesan, Myrtale. The whole is a monologue, the speech of Battarus as plaintiff, interrupted only by three verses where the clerk of the court reads a document. Even these were probably recited by Battarus, with a change of voice. His speech is a **Mime 2**

parody of the legal manner, of the conventions of legal oratory, a favorite comic theme, and contains the stock arguments of such a speech, the familiar devices to prejudice the jury against one's opponent, the stopping of the water clock while a document is read. It was to be delivered, of course, with an exaggeration of the law-court manner, made ridiculous by sudden lapses into coarseness of language and vulgar proverbs. Myrtale herself is exhibited to excite the pity of the jury, as in the famous incident when Hypereides brought forward Phryne, and the defendant is told that, after all, he may have her — for a consideration.

The third, the *Schoolmaster* (98 verses), is probably also a Coan episode. Metrotime brings her incorrigible son, Cottalus, to be soundly flogged by the schoolmaster Lampriscus. Cottalus is always either in the streets, or gambling, not with innocent knuckle-bones, but with coin, and that, too, on the roof, so that his mother must pay heavy bills for broken tiles. His wax tablet, the Greek slate, lies unused between his bed and the wall; if he is asked to speak a passage from tragedy, he halts and stumbles — *your grandmother, who had no schooling, could do it better* — in short, he is the bad boy of the place, and if the dominie would have mercy, his mother has none. The flogging scene follows. In the midst of it the boy escapes, with a taunt as soon as he is out of reach. *I will go home and tell the old man*, says his mother, *and next time he shall be tied fast, so that the Muses here, whom he hates, may look down from the wall on his struggles.*

Mime 3

The fourth, *Women making an Offering to Asclepius* (95 verses), describes the visit of two women to the temple of Asclepius, that famous Coan shrine which had been decorated with statues[1] and paintings. Like the women in the *Ion* of Euripides, they admire, with naïve exclamations, the sculptures by the sons of Praxiteles the Coan, the figure of a boy strangling a goose, as in the famous group in the Capitoline Museum, marveling at the realism — *soon men will learn to put life into stones.*

Mime 4

[1] The bases of some of these statues were uncovered by the excavations of 1902.

When the sacristan opens, at dawn, the doors of the shrine, they pass in and wonder at the paintings of Apelles the Ephesian, who spent much of his life at Cos. The works that they admire are all *genre* subjects, and we may gather something as to the personal tastes of Herodas, who seems to be defending Apelles from his critics. Soon the sacristan reports that their sacrifice of a cock is propitious, and, according to temple etiquette, receives a leg of the bird for his trouble. The rest they take home for dinner.

In the fifth, the *Jealous Mistress* (85 verses), Bitinna reproaches her slave Gastron, who is also her lover, with his attentions to another woman. Deaf to his protests, she calls a servant to bind and lead him to the whipping place, to be whipped to death. But no sooner has he been dragged away than she changes her mind, and sends her maid, who had interceded for the culprit, to order that Gastron shall be branded on the face instead. Even this is put off till after a festival, now at hand, and it seems likely that he will get off altogether. There is a similar situation in the fragment of a late *Mime* published among the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*.[1]

Mime 5

The sixth, the *Gossips* (102 verses), describes Metro's call on her friend Coritto to ask for a tradesman's address. The opening verses recall the similar scene in the *Syracusan Women* of Theocritus. The scene of the seventh, the *Shoemaker* (129 verses), is laid in a shoe shop. Metro comes to a fashionable bootmaker, and is shown his stock, with all the new patterns. The prices are high, from fifteen to twenty-five dollars a pair, and the *Mime* was perhaps a satire on the extravagance of women of fashion. The shopkeeper has the leading rôle, and speaks 110 of the verses.

Mimes 6 and 7

The eighth, the *Dream*, is much mutilated, and the end is lost. A woman wakes her slaves in the early morning with the usual scoldings, and relates to one of them, Anna, her strange dream or rather nightmare, in which a goat seems to have played a part, one of those dreams about animals of which

Mime 8

[1] III, 413.

Lucian's is the most famous Greek example. The narrative is continually broken by the loss of words and whole lines, and cannot be deciphered.

The *Mimes* of Herodas depend for their interest, not on the action, but on the character drawing. His personages, like the figures in New Comedy, are types, not caricatures, the fawning procuress, the lively and impudent Battarus who keeps a house of ill repute in a seaport and is not ashamed of the trade, the stiff schoolmaster, true type of the rod-loving (*plagosus*) pedagogue, the jealous Bitinna, capricious, cruel, and revengeful, the middle-class women who can never address a slave without harsh abuse. It is not a pleasing gallery of persons. Metriche, the virtuous wife, is the only one who utters proper sentiments, and there are few Greek works of the imagination from which moral reflections are so conspicuously absent. But every figure is lifelike, realistic as the sculptures and paintings that the women of the fourth *Mime* admire in the temple of Asclepius. Their speech is, of course, in character, the most colloquial Greek that we possess, crowded with vulgar proverbs, the favorite expression of the uneducated in every age. There is no trace of the learned manner of the Alexandrians. Verbs are constantly omitted, as is natural in rapid conversation.

How the *Mimes* were intended to be performed is an open question. For a regular stage they were, of course, unsuitable, and much too brief. But they have a modern parallel in those dialogues performed in our own time, both in England and America, where a single actor represents by changes of voice, manner, and gesture the necessary changes of person and scene, those social sketches which are really mimes, and are written for private entertainments and the music halls.[1] The *Mimes* of Herodas may well have appeared at the music halls of Alexandria, or at private parties, such as that in the house of Callias in Xenophon's *Sym-*

[1] The dialogues for one actor, made popular by Grossmith, Chevalier, and Beatrice Herford, are prose mimes, often in length and scope precisely parallel to a mime of Herodas.

posium, when the entertainment was a pantomimic dance of Theseus and Ariadne.

That Herodas knew his Theocritus well may be gathered from a number of parallel passages. Many of these, however, may be coincidences arising from similar subjects, and represent turns of phrase and thought common in their generation and society.

Though the dialect of Cos was Doric, Herodas followed the lead of Hipponax and the other iambic writers of the seventh and sixth centuries in using the conventional literary Ionic. The text, as we have it, shows a good deal of Atticism, the natural result of the influence of the Attic comedians and orators, though Atticizing copyists are, no doubt, partly responsible. There are numerous echoes of Aristophanes.[1]

Akin to a mime may have been the composition of which Grenfell published a considerable fragment in 1896.[2] This is the so-called *Erotic Fragment.* It is the lament of a girl deserted by her lover, like the Simaetha of Theocritus. As she slowly advances, apparently towards the house of the faithless one, she pours forth, in language broken by excited grief, short, disconnected sentences, the tale of their love, his desertion, her own constancy and eagerness to forgive, the abandonment of her passion. Only about fifty lines of this monologue have been discovered, and of these perhaps thirty are decipherable. Are they poetry or prose? The diction is not that of any Greek lyric known to us. It is the colloquial language of common life, realistic as Herodas, and if anything less literary. Blass, Diels, and Weil assign it to the category of rhythmic prose and compare the traditional style of the lost *Mimes* of Sophron. In that case we could but regard it as a piece of debased writing, in which, in the Asianic manner, rhythmical prose has become metrical. For the greater part of the fragment is written in dochmiacs, the meter of excitement in tragedy, a

The Erotic Fragment

[1] Krakert, *Herodas in mimiambis quatenus comoediam graecam respexisse videatur*, Leipzig, 1902.

[2] *An Alexandrian Erotic Fragment and Other Greek Papyri*, Oxford, 1896.

rhythm wholly unsuited to prose. It is, therefore, more satisfactory to accept the arrangement of Wilamowitz, and to regard the fragment as a unique relic of Alexandrian lyric, related, if we must find a parallel for it in the classical period, to the monodies of Euripides. We may call it an Alexandrian aria, not unlike those other dramatic lyrics of about the same date, the *cantica* of the plays of Plautus. To appreciate its undeniable beauty and pathos we must, for the moment, forget the standards set by the classical passages of emotional writing, since to these the Alexandrian author of the piece did not conform. Its date is partly indicated by the date of a contract written on the *recto* of the papyrus in 173 B.C. The aria may have been composed some years earlier.

Every type of literature was essayed by the Alexandrians. Of their epics, mythological (the *Argonautica*), *genre* (the *Hecale*), and historical (the *Messenians*), we know enough for a fair comparison with the classic models. But of the purely Alexandrian drama we have no remains. The titles that survive show that it was imitative. It is at any rate unlikely that we have lost much by the disappearance of the numerous tragedies of the Pleiad, seven tragic poets who produced plays at Alexandria and are spoken of with respect by the commentators. Even their names are not worth an effort of memory. The poets of the New Comedy, Menander and his successors, belong in point of time to the Alexandrian period. But Athens was their center, and they have been treated under the head of Attic Comedy in an earlier chapter.

The drama

One of the tragic poets of the Pleiad composed a poem which can hardly have been surpassed as a literary curiosity, even in that age of learned poetry. LYCOPHRON of Chalcis was born about 320, as nearly as can be conjectured from other known facts of his career. He died about 265, on the stage, and in his tragic boots (*cothurnatus*), if we may trust an allusion to the event in Ovid's *Ibis*.[1] He was appointed, about 285, by Ptolemy Philadelphus, to arrange the comedies in the Alexandrian

Lycophron

[1] 531–532.

Library. The fruit of that task, his nine Books on Comedy, have perished like his tragedies. But there has survived his *Alexandra* (or *Cassandra*), a poem written (*circa* 295) in iambic trimeters (1474 verses), which enjoys the distinction of being the most obscure production of Greek literature, a *tour de force* of cryptic language. It is a long monologue spoken by a soldier in the name of Priam's daughter, a report from memory of her prophecy of the fall of Troy. It is as though Lycophron had tried to account for Cassandra's failure to convince the Trojans of their coming doom, by putting in her mouth expressions to which no Trojan could have the key. The *Alexandra* is a riddle which only the eccentric attempt to read. It exists as a monument of learned folly, the labyrinth of Lycophron 'the obscure,' composed for an academic clique and interesting to that clique alone.

The epigrams and short poems of the Alexandrians, together with those of earlier and greater poets, such as Simonides, and of the poets of the Graeco-Roman period, have come down to us in two anthologies. The first anthologist of importance was Meleager of Gadara, whose *Garland*, made in the first century B.C., was absorbed in later collections. This was the fate, too, of the amatory *Anthology* of Strato of Sardis, compiled in the reign of Hadrian. Then came the *Anthology* of Agathias, a Byzantine poet of the sixth Christian century, who set the example of arranging his selections under subjects. A grammarian of the tenth century, Constantinus Cephalas, in a brief revival of learning at Constantinople, compiled the *Palatine Anthology*, so called because the manuscript on which we depend was found in the Palatine Library at Heidelberg.[1] It represents about 320 poets, and was arranged, like that of Agathias, by subjects, though with no great consistency. Cephalas was succeeded by Maximus Planudes, a learned monk of Constantinople, who, in the fourteenth century, made an *Anthology* in seven Books. He based his work on that of Cephalas, adding 397 poems and omitting many, especially the work of the older poets. *Away with*

The Anthology

[1] By Saumaise (Salmasius), in 1606.

old poetry! said Timotheus,[1] in his day, and this fatal Greek preference for the moderns is responsible for the loss of many of the most exquisite flowers of Meleager's *Garland*, which were dropped out by the later anthologists, such as the 'roses' of Sappho or the 'rough white-thorn' of Archilochus.

Since the discovery of the *Palatine Anthology* it has superseded the work of Planudes, except, indeed, where he supplements Cephalas. The poems in the *Anthology* include brief idyls, odes, elegies, and especially every type of epigram, and range in date from the seventh century B.C. to the twelfth century A.D. The majority are in elegiac meter. From the first the Greek poets wrote epigrams for inscriptions on offerings, for tombs (epitaphs), for works of art, for any occasion which would admit of an expressive couplet or quatrain. But in Alexandria the epigram has become literary, and is used much like the madrigal or sonnet in English literature, to express a wide variety of interests and emotions. Love, which, since the dawn of the New Comedy, had usurped the stage, had long dominated elegy, and, with the Alexandrians, invaded the epigram. In the three centuries before Christ, which saw all the phases of Alexandrinism and the transition to the Graeco-Roman period in literature, the art of writing the epigram reached its height. Certain poets who excelled in this type, including Meleager himself, fall under the period of Roman influence in politics, but their interests lay, almost always, on the eastern side of the Aegean, or, at any rate, they ignored Rome.

Asclepiades

Asclepiades of Samos (*floruit* 290 B.C.) who gave his name to certain logaoedic meters used by Horace, wrote lyrics, but was most famous for his epigrams, the 'windflowers' of Meleager's *Garland*. Of the forty-three that survive, many are among the prettiest of the erotic type: —

O Garlands, hanging by these doors, now stay,
Nor from your leaves too quickly shake away
My dew of tears, (How many such, ah me!
A lover's eyes must shed!)

[1] *Persae* 21.

But when the opening of these doors ye see,
Let slowly drop my rain upon her head,
That so her golden hair may drink more deep
Those tears that I did weep.[1]

In an epigram of a different type, which echoes the literary controversies of the day, he admires the *Lyde* of Antimachus, that bone of contention among the Alexandrians.[2]

We have 111 epigrams, chiefly sepulchral and dedicatory, of Leonidas of Tarentum (*circa* 276 B.C.), whose 'rich ivy clusters' Meleager wove into his *Garland*. He is at his best in descriptions: *Drink not here, wayfarer, of this tepid water, which the pasturing sheep have filled with mud. Go on but a little way over the ridge where heifers graze; there by that stone-pine of the shepherds thou shalt find, murmuring through the wet rock, a spring colder than any snow of the North.*[3] If we interpret his life from his epigrams,[4] he was a poor and wandering poet who suffered from the war of the Romans and Pyrrhus, and his epigrams are written chiefly for the poor. They reflect the pathos of the life of the hard-worked — the fisherman who falls asleep in his hut of reeds by the Mediterranean, the spinning woman who, till her eightieth year, toils to keep hunger from the door.[5]

Leonidas

Simmias of Rhodes and Dosiadas of Crete expended their ingenuity in writing poems in shapes, an egg, or Love's wings,[6] an exercise that even Theocritus did not despise, if he really wrote the *Syrinx* (*Shepherd's Pipe*) preserved under his name in the *Anthology*.[7] The *Altar* of Dosiadas, which Lucian bracketed with Lycophron's *Alexandra* as pestilent pedantry,[8] has an exact parallel in the conceit of George Herbert's poem, whose sixteen lines are arranged in the form of an altar.

Figured Poems

Women poets have their place in the *Anthology*. Besides three

[1] *Anth. Pal.* 5. 145. A. Strettell's translation.
[2] *Anth. Pal* 9. 63.
[3] *Anth. Plan.* 230.
[4] *Anth. Pal.* 6. 300.
[5] Cp. Sainte-Beuve in *Nouveaux Lundis* VII.
[6] *Anth. Pal.* 15. 27, 23.
[7] 15. 21.
[8] *Lexiphanes* 25.

charming epigrams by the fourth-century Erinna, we have a few petals of the 'lilies' of ANYTE of Tegea, collected by Meleager, chiefly little pictures full of delicacy and an Alexandrian tenderness for animals and sympathy with nature. Such is the dedication for a Hermes which stands *by a windy orchard, near the gray seashore, offering rest for weary men on their way*, or the sea shrine of Aphrodite *about which the very sea is stirred as it gazes on her shining image.* We have twelve epigrams of NOSSIS of Locri, who, early in the third century, dared to challenge the superiority of Sappho,[1] but only one of her erotic poems, those lovely and fragrant iris blooms of which Meleager said that, for the tablets on which they were written, Love with his own hands had melted the wax. *Thus saith Nossis*, are the closing words, *Whom the Cyprian loveth not, knows not what roses her flowers are.*[2]

Anyte and Nossis

It would be idle to continue the list of these minor poets, for whose shallow-rooted verses skill and taste, not genius, fancy, rather than imagination, were demanded. Their epigrams are best understood when described in groups according to their interests rather than as the expression of individuals. The flower gatherers to whom we owe this precious collection have left us blossoms of all shapes, scents, and colors, to illustrate all the emotions, love, hate, grief, literary jealousy, all the pursuits of life, the pathos of death, the dangers of the sea, which to the Alexandrian eye ever suggested the unquiet grave of mariners who "toss with tangle and with shells." The shores are set thick with the tombs of the more fortunate who could at least win the rites of burial. Seldom do the epitaphs of the shipwrecked rise above the listless melancholy which makes so much of the Alexandrian *Anthology* depressing to read. But once, at any rate, Theodorus sounds a nobler note of encouragement: —

> *Here lies a shipwrecked mariner; yet do thou sail;*
> *When we were lost, the other boats rode out the gale.*[3]

[1] *Anth. Pal.* 7. 718. [2] *Anth. Pal.* 5. 170. [3] *Anth. Pal.* 7. 281.

There is one more poet to be singled out, whose name is dear to the anthologist as well as to the lover of poetry, MELEAGER, the Syrian poet of Gadara (Ramoth-Gilead). His *floruit* falls in the first century B.C. His life was spent partly at Tyre, the last years at Cos. In his famous *Garland*, dispersed by later anthologists, he collected, as a keepsake for his friend Diocles, the short poems of some forty poets, from Sappho's flowers, *so few, but all roses*, to the epigrams written in his own day, such as the 'young Phoenician cypress' of Antipater of Sidon, well known in the Ciceronian circle, and the 'early white violets' of his own muse. We have the preface of his *Garland*, fifty-eight verses written in elegiac couplets, each poet associated with some flower. In our *Anthology* survive about one hundred of the erotic epigrams in which he excelled. Meleager's verses are among the most tender and musical in the *Anthology*. With their florid imagery, their sensuous and impassioned but not simple manner, they suggest the influence of his Oriental blood, and if they are to be labeled with an appropriate flower, it should be, not the white violet that he chose as his emblem, but some delicate and heavily scented exotic. No other poet of the *Anthology* has confided so many of his love adventures. In the long list of his flames, Heliodora, 'soul of my soul,' is dearest of all: *I will twine the white violet and the tender narcissus with myrtle, and laughing lilies and the sweet crocus, and with these the purple hyacinth, yea, I will twine roses, the lover's flower, so that on Heliodora's temples, where her curls are sweet with myrrh, my garland may shed its petals on those lovely locks.*[1] Chénier imitated Meleager's brief idyl[2] which describes in 24 hexameters the coming of spring in the fields, the woods, on the shore, and on the open sea, a poem which breathes the pastoral sweetness of Theocritus. Meleager has often been called the Greek Ovid because of his tenderness, and sensibility, and preoccupation with love. Sainte-Beuve pointed out close parallels of thought and expression in Petrarch, who certainly never had a chance to read Meleager.

Meleager

[1] *Anth. Pal.* 5. 147. [2] 9. 363.

A fresh section might be added to the *Anthology* from the best of the inscriptional epigrams recovered by archaeologists, and collected by Kaibel.[1] His volume of lapidary inscriptions includes the work of many centuries, recovered in Greece, Asia, and the islands, epigrams that illustrate all the grades of skill attained, not only by the Greeks, but by the Romans and Orientals who copied their lapidary style.

Of all that was written in prose by the Alexandrian circle, not a single work survived to become a classic. Out of that nest of pedants came more than one poet, and most of the poets wrote prose. But to judge from the fragments that survive, their writings contained nothing whose loss we need regret, except certain information which would be useful for the historian of literature. Treatises they wrote, but these were philological, the work of men interested in grammar rather than in the principles of criticism.

Alexander, who was so eager to inspire a great literary monument, was singularly unfortunate in falling on a time that was barren of historical genius. His Oriental campaigns should have been to historians what the Persian and Peloponnesian wars were to Herodotus and Thucydides. But the writers whom he took in his train were wholly unequal to their task. Men like Ptolemy I, Aristobulus, and Callisthenes, to name a few of those who had the ambition to be the historians of Alexander, produced military memoirs and journals of no literary value, or mere marvelous fictions designed to flatter Alexander's vanity. Besides these, Douris of Samos (born *circa* 340) wrote ponderous histories of Macedonia and Greece from the date of Leuctra (371), which were used as books of reference by later historians. Timaeus of Tauromenium in Sicily (born *circa* 345) was an industrious writer whose masterpiece was his history of Sicily. Half of his long life he spent at Athens, so that he did not belong to the Alexandrian circle. In spite of his vast erudition and industry, he is constantly abused by Polybius, who is, no doubt, a prejudiced critic. Timaeus was a true pedant writing history, and even

The historians

[1] *Epigrammata graeca ex lapidibus conlecta*, Berlin, 1878.

that pedantic age recognized that he was too bookish. Longinus quoted him to illustrate the paltry pleasantries and the frigidity of a pedant writing in the worst rhetorical manner,[1] the manner of the 'Asianists.'

The works of these men, and of others of their tribe, survive in fragments, derelicts in the sea of learning, with no significance for literature, only to be mentioned for the sake of continuity and to point the moral of the lack of creative vitality in their day. It was the age of the encyclopedists, of men like ERATOSTHENES, who succeeded his master Callimachus as librarian. He left hardly any subject untouched and was perhaps the worthiest of the Alexandrian savants because the most scientific. Geography, mathematics, physics, philosophical commentaries, chronology, the history of poetry, were among his interests. Of all that industry little survives, and, apart from a small circle of specialists, the modern student knows Eratosthenes only as the inventor of a method for finding prime numbers, the celebrated "sieve," and as an authority on the early chronology of Greece.

Eratosthenes

The center of philosophy in the third century was not Alexandria, but Athens. There Plato's Academy continued to flourish and his philosophy to be modified by his successors, Speusippus, Xenocrates, Polemon, and Crates, who made practical ethics, the ethics of the individual rather than political morality, their chief interest. Xenocrates conceived of the Ideas as numbers, and introduced a Pythagorizing tendency. Several of the school were distinguished mathematicians, such as Eudoxus, Neocleides, and Heracleides. The Lyceum of Aristotle under Theophrastus and the later scholarchs kept up the traditions of its founder. The Platonists have no place in the history of literature since their writings have almost entirely perished. It would be unfair, in the absence of nearly all those works of Aristotle which were destined by him for publication, to dwell on his apparent indifference to style. But the decline of philosophical prose may safely be illustrated from Epicurus and the

Philosophy

[1] *On the Sublime* 4.

Epicureans, Chrysippus and the Stoics. *It is easy to write*, said Epicurus.[1]

The immediate successor of Aristotle cannot be so lightly dismissed. THEOPHRASTUS, the friend of Menander and pupil of Aristotle, was born in Lesbos in 372. Athens, to which he emigrated as a youth, became his home, and there, after the death of Aristotle (322), he ranked as the most distinguished philosopher and most popular teacher of the day. He died in 287, providing by his will for the maintenance of the Lyceum. Of his numerous works we have two on botany, and considerable fragments of other philosophical treatises. He discussed in his lost works several subjects that had already been handled by Aristotle, and with a freshness that won the admiration of Cicero. But though philosophy was the main interest of his life, the work for which he is known to the general reader, and which gives him his place in the history of literature, is a little book of extracts from some larger work, whether on poetry or rhetoric. This is the famous *Moral Characters*, a collection of thirty character sketches, types of men as he saw them in Athenian society, as one may see them in any society to-day. Here was excellent material for a writer of mimes like Herodas, or of Menander's comedy of manners, and the latter may have used his friend's sketches, unless, indeed, his own plays inspired them. They are all portraits of weaknesses and absurdities, or of bad manners which amounted almost to crime in Athenian eyes. Each sketch is labeled with the name of a foible, *Stupidity*, *Lack of Tact*, or the like. Each opens with a definition of the quality, a touch that betrays the philosopher, and proceeds to a concrete illustration of the man subject to it, his actions, his conversation, his effect on others. Theophrastus has had many imitators, especially in England and France, in the seventeenth century. Bishop Hall, for his *Characters of Vertues and Vices* (London, 1608), Bishop Earle, for his *Micro-cosmographie* (London, 1628), Sir Thomas Overbury for his *Characters of Witty Descriptions*

Theophrastus

The Characters

[1] Dionys. Hal., *On the Arrangement of Words* 24. Cp. *supra*, p. 376.

(London, 1614), took Theophrastus for their model, and in France La Bruyère's *Les Caractères ou les moeurs de ce siècle* (Paris, 1688), though very different in its aim, which was to satirize the individuals of his time, was inspired by the Greek example, and to it he added a paraphrase of the *Characters* of Theophrastus. Theophrastus wrote several rhetorical treatises which have perished. Of the work *On Style* we have fragments. His own style has no special distinction.[1] The merit of the sketches lies in their universality, which will make them outlast La Bruyère, their psychology, their humor, and the powers of observation that they display.

It has been assumed that the philosophical writings of the various third-century schools are of interest only to historians of philosophy, but there is one exception. This, however, is not prose. It is the *Hymn to Zeus* of the Stoic Cleanthes, and was written about 300 B.C. These 38 hexameters are not to be classed with the purely academic *Hymns* of Callimachus. They bear, indeed, the traces of the philosophic development that lay between the writer and the early 'Homeric' *Hymns*. Here Zeus is the One, the 'Intelligence that goes to and fro.' But Cleanthes is devout; his language was quoted by Saint Paul;[2] and this breath of sincerity makes the *Hymns* of Callimachus and Theocritus seem by comparison mere literary exercises. Still more famous is a quatrain preserved by Epictetus[3] in which Cleanthes expresses the religious fervor that characterized the nobler Stoics: *Lead me, O Zeus and thou, Destiny, whithersoever my place has been assigned by you. Unfaltering I shall follow. But should I turn coward and refuse, I shall follow none the less.*

[1] Theophrastus followed Aristotle (*Rhetoric* 3. 1.) in condemning Gorgianic prose as fine writing that appeals only to the uneducated. Dion. Hal., *Lysias* 14.

[2] Cp. *Acts* xvii 28 with Cleanthes, *Hymn* 4. The same phrase was used by Aratus, *Phaenomena* 5.

[3] *Enchir.* 53.

The Alexandrians cared little for oratorical prose, and it was Athens, not Alexandria, that produced the last Greek orator of distinction. DEMETRIUS of Phalerum (*circa* 345–283 B.C.) was one whose suavity, elegance, polish, and subtlety all the critics praised. Cicero found in his speeches the very perfume of Athens. Quintilian called him the 'last Attic orator,' implying, however, by the turn of his phrase that the last two words of the title were not proof against challenge. All indeed agreed that his name stood for the decline of eloquence, and to balance the terms of praise, they declared that this pupil of Theophrastus, whose lot it was to govern Athens for ten years as the viceroy of Macedonia, was just such a speaker as one might expect the schools of philosophy to send out into the dust and heat of public life. Actually he was the only conspicuous orator trained in the school of Aristotle. His style had all the defects that may accompany the qualities conceded by the critics. It was effeminate, emotional without being inspiring, florid, tricked out with the spurious charms, the paints and dyes of a courtesan. The style was the man, the reflection of a dissipated life. It was in his time that the Greeks, who no longer had the inspiration of real contests in the sphere of politics, began to compose declamations, exercises in rhetoric, which were to take the place of oratory among them and to form an essential part of the training of the Roman orators. Of the speeches that Demetrius actually delivered we have no remains. But in Stobaeus is preserved a fragment of a declamation, enough to illustrate the faults of taste described by the Roman critics. Demetrius was a man of great learning. After his fall from power at Athens, he went to Alexandria to act as consulting librarian to Ptolemy I in the formation of the Library. The treatise *On Style*, which passes under his name, is not now allowed to be his, and is described elsewhere.[1]

Demetrius of Phalerum

We may regard Demetrius as the first important representative of Asianism in Greek oratory. This was the name given to a tendency that the purists deplored in Cicero's day. But Deme-

[1] See *infra*, Chapter XXIII.

trius was not the first 'Asianist.' The defects that separated the Asianic from the Attic and the Atticizing orators were, in fact, already existent in Gorgias himself and his followers, and had been set aside by the severer taste of the Attic orators of the best period of Greek eloquence. Asianism was hardly a matter of geography, though it is an Asiatic, Hegesias of Magnesia, who is generally held responsible for this strange cult of style. It was a term leveled by the purists, who preferred to copy the Lysianic or Demosthenic manner, at all who abandoned the periodic style in favor of short sentences (the 'kommatic' style 'in phrases'), and at the same time employed antithesis, rhythm, and assonance to excess. The Muse of the Asianists was overdressed, their rhythms were effeminate, a lapse of morals from the standpoint of the purer Greek taste, their pathos was employed without discretion and rang false, their diction included words that Lysias would have discarded as poetic, unsuited to the genius of prose. In short, they lacked taste, and whether they came from the outskirts of Athens, like Demetrius, or, like Hegesias, from Magnesia mattered little. Asianists in every age mark the decline of eloquence and pride themselves on their very faults, as these men must have done. Atticism, however, proved to be the safe path, and the Asianic danger was short-lived, as is seen in the practice of the majority of the Graeco-Roman rhetoricians.

Asianism

Of Hegesias of Magnesia we have several fragments, preserved in the quotations of his critics. He stands more decidedly than Demetrius for the degradation of oratorical prose, because he had not the charm that won for the other the half-reluctant approbation of the Romans. Cicero gives an amusing parody of his jerky style. His rhythms were held up by the critics as an example of what to avoid, and of the dangers of falling into metrical prose. Forced and out-of-the-way metaphors, circumlocutions instead of the simple word, false antitheses, a close and artificial correspondence of clauses, are some of the faults that can be illustrated from the fragments, and they are

Hegesias

precisely the weaknesses that had been introduced originally by Gorgias and his followers in the fifth century. A good example of the bombast which might result from indulgence in this style is the long, boastful inscription of Antiochus of Commagene, written as a record of his achievements that was to last 'for all time' by some Greek rhetorician in the first century B.C.[1] With this excited, overdecorated style, dithyrambic, full of new or poetic words, Greek prose written for an Oriental potentate, we have reached the antipodes of Athenian prose writing.

Alexandria had a rival in Pergamon, the capital of the Attalids in northwestern Asia Minor. Like the Ptolemies, Attalus I (241–197 B.C.) and his successors desired to Hellenize their kingdom and to oppose as a bulwark, here, where the Celts menaced civilization, the culture of Greece. At Pergamon grew up a Library second only to that of Alexandria, in which it was absorbed when Antony made a present of its 200,000 volumes to Cleopatra. Here flourished a school of Homeric criticism and a still more famous school of sculpture, and the Attalids encouraged rhetoric, as Alexandria did not, but no poets or prose writers worth the name rewarded their patronage. NICANDER of Colophon is the solitary poet whom we need consider, and that only because it happened that he was too ambitious to write in prose. He wrote epic, but Hippocratean epic, not inspired by Homer. He was a physician, and his two long poems that survive, the *Theriaca* (958 verses) and the *Alexipharmaca* (630 verses) are didactic and wholly medical in their interest and rank among the curiosities of literature. A bucolic poem which Vergil imitated in his *Georgics* has perished.

Nicander

ANTIGONUS of Carystus in Euboea was among those whom Attalus invited to his court. He was a sculptor who wrote on art, unless, as some think, we must admit a second Antigonus. His masterpiece, the *Lives of the Philosophers*, has perished. But there has survived the *Wonderbook*,

Antigonus of Carystus

[1] First published in Humann and Puchstein's *Reisen in Kleinasien u. Nordsyrien*, Berlin, 1890. See Norden, *Antike Kunstprosa* I 141.

concerned mainly with stories of animals. This collection of strange stories is derived partly from Aristotle's *History of Animals*, and in part, too, from a somewhat similar book of marvelous tales by Callimachus. With this writer of the *Wonderbook* we must not confuse another Antigonus of Carystus who wrote epigrams which were collected in the *Anthology* of Philip of Thessalonica. Of the Pergamene critics of Homer, Crates of Mallus is the chief. He founded the Pergamene school of allegorical criticism in opposition to Aristarchus (*circa* 220–145), with whom he maintained a bitter rivalry.

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[1] In his *Bucolici Graeci* (1906) Wilamowitz abandons the current classification of the *Idyls*, which dates from Stephanus, and, accepting the order indicated in the MSS (especially K), arranges the *Theocritea* and *Bucolica* as follows: Theocritus 1, 7, 3–6, 8–13, 14, 2, 15, 17, 16, 18, 24, 22, 28–30, epigrams, fragment. An Appendix contains all the bucolic poems that now pass under the names of Moschus and Bion, and the remaining 'Theocritean' *Idyls*, whose genuineness cannot be proved. Finally he includes the *Technopaegnia*, thus restored to their ancient position as an Appendix to Theocritus.

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CHAPTER XXIII

GRAECO-ROMAN LITERATURE

THE first name with which we have to deal personifies the relations between Greece and Rome which give their peculiar coloring to the literature of the first century B.C. and the six Christian centuries down to Justinian. POLYBIUS of Megalopolis was born about 210 B.C. His native city had joined in 253 the Achaean League, one of the last efforts of that race of born separatists to coöperate after the death of Alexander. The League included a great part of the Peloponnesus and Megara. Athens stood aloof from its activities, and Sparta was hostile. With this League of upstart provincials, as they must have seemed to Athens and Sparta, the family of Polybius was closely connected, and his own fortunes, as it proved, depended on its political relations with Rome. His father Lycortas was a prominent Achaean statesman, and when Philopoemen, the Achaean leader, whose Life Plutarch wrote, was poisoned in 184 by the mutineers at Messene, Lycortas took his place as general of the League, and Polybius, then a young man, carried the hero's ashes in the solemn funeral procession to Megalopolis. In 168 Perseus, the last king of Macedonia, was crushed by the Romans, and there followed a persecution of all Greeks who were not conspicuously pro-Roman. A thousand leading Achaeans were deported to Rome to stand trial for alleged resistance to Roman rule. Among them went Polybius. In Rome there was no trial, and seventeen years later the survivors, reduced to three hundred, were allowed to return to Greece (150 B.C.). Polybius had turned the long leisure of his exile to good account. He had been admitted into the Scipionic circle, was the intimate friend of Scipio Africanus the Younger, and

Polybius

became a complete convert to Roman methods and the right of Rome to rule the world. For his life-task he chose to write the history of the Roman Conquest, of that wonderful half century which made Rome the mistress of the known world and turned other empires and kingdoms into her provinces. Four years after the restoration of the Achaean exiles, Rome put an end to the petty quarrels of the Greeks. Mummius made an example of Corinth, the headquarters of the anti-Roman party, and Greece became a Roman province, Achaea. After that, a Nero might proclaim the freedom of the Greeks (67 A.D.) as Flaminius had done in 196 B.C. — "a gift of that which is not to be given" — but this was merely sentimental ostentation and had no political meaning. Polybius, at least, had no illusions as to the future of his countrymen. He had seen one king of Macedonia after another humbled by Roman arms, Antiochus of Syria routed at Magnesia in 190, Rome predominant in Asia and Egypt. He was present when his friend Scipio destroyed Carthage in 146, and again when he closed the war in Spain by the sack of Numantia in 133. 'Our Polybius,' as Cicero calls him,[1] lived too soon to be influenced by the affectation that, later, made Greek writers avoid all allusion to Rome as unbefitting the vocabulary of the pure Atticist. He saw that Providence or Fortune (τύχη)[2] was on the Roman side, and there was little bitterness in his lament for his country's fall: *Here ends that period of fifty-three years; this is the climax of the growth and progress of the Roman empire. Thenceforth all men seemed forced to believe that they had no choice but to obey all the orders of Rome.*[3] Polybius thought that the Greeks, those 'driveling' Achaean cities, had worked their own ruin. Hellenism had grown shabby, and he would not conceal its decay. Yet he did not stand aloof from the Greeks in misfortune, and acted as intercessor with the Romans after the fall of Corinth. Nor did his countrymen regard him as a renegade since they set up his

[1] *On the Republic* 2. 14.

[2] Though not a professed Stoic, Polybius constantly shows the influence of Stoic doctrines.

[3] 3. 4.

statue near those of Aratus and Philopoemen, the heroes of the Achaean League. The latter part of his life was spent in Greece, and there he died at the age of eighty-two.

His *History* was composed in forty Books of which only five are extant entire. 1 and 2 are introductory, and give an account of the First Punic War and the war of the Carthaginians with their mercenaries, the relations of Rome and Illyria, and the story of the Achaeans down to the death of Cleomenes in 220.

The History

Book 3 is the history of the Second Punic War to the battle of Cannae in 216. Books 4 and 5 relate the struggles of the Achaean League and the exploits of Antiochus of Syria and of Philip of Macedon. Of 6–18 we have long extracts in special manuscripts, and considerable fragments of the remainder of the work down to 144. Trained in both politics and war and by close intercourse with the conquerors of the world, Polybius had unique qualifications for writing universal history. As a historian he is thoroughly impartial both to Greece and Rome, not disguising the faults of either. Truth he worshiped like a goddess,[1] and spared no pains in collecting his evidence. "No other author of antiquity," says Mommsen, "perhaps, can be named to whom we are indebted for so much real instruction. His books are like the sun in Roman history; at the point where they begin, the mist which still envelops the Samnite and Pyrrhic wars is raised; and at the point where they end, a new, and if possible, still more vexatious twilight begins."[2]

The fact remains that Polybius is not read. He is a good instance of the Nemesis that waits on those who think, with Epicurus, that it is easy to write, and that it is enough, if your subject-matter be interesting, to set down the truth and let the style take care of itself.

Style

He saw in his predecessors, Timaeus, or Zeno of Rhodes, or Phylarchus, who wrote history as though it were tragedy,[3] efforts at fine writing which he took every occasion to denounce. Much, indeed, of his own work is devoted to the criticism of others, and he spends no less than

[1] 13. 5. [2] *History of Rome* III 468. [3] Polybius 2. 56.

forty pages in dissecting Timaeus. History had, in fact, in his day turned to mere panegyric. Though he admitted a number of speeches into his work, he saw their danger for the historian. But in avoiding any tendency to fiction he fled to the other extreme. He seems to lack all artistic sense. He did indeed avoid hiatus, but apart from this no writer better illustrates by his lack of it the value of Greek training in rhetoric. He did not attempt to write pure Attic, but used the 'common' dialect with all its neologisms which were to be so carefully avoided by later purists. In him we look in vain for those appeals to the imagination, those "living images" which Shelley[1] reminds us were used by all the great historians "to fill the interstices of their subject." Nor are his faults of style merely negative. His sentences are long and unwieldy, and he has a mania for the use of the abstract substantive which is perhaps the greatest blemish on his style. Yet no historical subject could be more interesting than that with which he dealt. He neglected the opportunity to make his recital classical. A good example of such neglect is his account, in twenty-two chapters, of the mutiny of the 20,000 mercenaries of Carthage. From the hands of a Thucydides we should have received a *locus classicus* of the horrors of the revolt of a horde of mercenaries, who, like the natives of India in the last century, had learned from their masters the arts of war, but not how to use them like civilized men. The material is all there, the Babel of dialects in that crowd of barbarians and villainous Greeks where only one word *Strike!* was known to all alike; their treachery and revenge; the panic of Carthage as the mutineers grew more menacing with every concession; the mutilations of the captured, the trampling of elephants; the final slaughter of thousands. All this is lost to the world of letters because it is written in Greek that one would hesitate to set before a schoolboy.

Polybius must have been a prize to the writers of epitomes. He addressed his *History* mainly to the Romans, and he would have

[1] *Defense of Poetry.*

been consoled for Greek criticism of his style[1] by the anecdote of Brutus, that man of action, spending the eve of Pharsalia over an epitome of his work. Polybius was followed by Livy where they covered the same ground.

The division of the Graeco-Roman period by the reigns of the Roman emperors, or by the revival, more than once, of Greek letters under the patronage of phil-Hellenic rulers like Hadrian and the Antonines, has much significance for the history of prose writing, but none for poetry. As one searches the barren two centuries after Meleager, there is no evidence that outside influences affected the production of poetry. A Greek poet, had one appeared, would have been greeted at Rome with no less enthusiasm than at Alexandria a century earlier. But no such poet arose. In the epic *genre* one or two names emphasize the fact that Apollonius was to remain long without a rival. OPPIAN'S didactic poem *On Fishing*, published between 177 and 180 A.D., and dedicated to Marcus Aurelius and his son Commodus, is a contribution to natural history. It has survived to illustrate a didactic type which was very popular in the Graeco-Roman centuries. Oppian was a man of Nicander's school and imitated him. His poem may be allowed to represent a whole literature on fishing, in prose and verse. Oppian's descriptions are accurate enough to interest the modern naturalist. An epic *On Hunting*, of which we have four Books, has come down under his name, but is the work of some later and inferior poet. His style is extremely ornate, and was more congenial to the scholiasts than to any later reader.

Oppian

It is not till the fourth century that we encounter once more a writer of mythological epic whose name has some literary importance. QUINTUS of Smyrna wrote a *Sequel to the Iliad* in fourteen short Books. Of his life we know nothing save his own statement that he was inspired, like Hesiod, by the Muses with the theme of his epic as he pastured his flocks in the

Quintus Smyrnaeus

[1] Dionys. Hal., *On the Arrangement of Words* 4, reckons Polybius with those whom 'no man endures to read through.'

plains of Smyrna.[1] Even his date is a matter of conjecture. His epic describes, in something less than 9000 verses, the events after Hector's burial. For these he drew on the *Aethiopis*. Quintus continues the narrative down to the shipwreck of the Greeks on their return, and gives a long and detailed account of the slow death of the lesser Ajax. The whole is an abridged version of the cyclic epics of the Trojan saga, intended for fourth-century readers. Whether Quintus had the original epics before him, or depended on extracts or prose versions we cannot say with certainty. He imitates Homer in almost every phrase, and owes something to Apollonius of Rhodes, and, perhaps, to Vergil. He wrote with great technical facility. Though his poem has many signs of lateness, and no suggestion of original genius, it is readable and singularly free from sophistic affectations. The versification indicates that Quintus, who was fond of dactyls, but not a dactylomaniac, preceded Nonnus.

Nonnus

About a century later than Quintus of Smyrna, a fifth-century poet, NONNUS, a Hellenized Egyptian of Panopolis, who, if we may trust his epitaph by an unknown poet in the *Anthology*, spent most of his life at Alexandria, wrote the *Story of Dionysus* in forty-eight Books, a ponderous work, nearly as long as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* put together. Euphorion, the Alexandrian, had written an epic on the same theme, and Soterichus the Egyptian in the fourth century A.D. had composed a *Bassarica*. On both these Nonnus drew for the numerous adventures and metamorphoses of the wandering Dionysus. He was an imitative poet who followed Homer closely and owed much to the *Bacchae* of Euripides for his episode of Pentheus. For many of the amorous adventures of Dionysus himself and other mythical love stories, which he delights to narrate, he used Alexandrian models. His *divers-colored Hymn*,[2] as he calls the *Dionysiaca*, is a rambling, confused series of legends which defies every canon of epic proportion and composition. For his style he owed much to Callimachus and Apollonius, but he dwelt on the sensual side of

[1] 12. 310.

[2] *Dionysiaca* 1. 15.

his legends in a manner that was not Alexandrian, but Oriental. His Greek is rhetorical, and feverish as the most disordered dithyramb. There are passages that could be written out in prose as a sophistic declamation, as, for instance, the speech of Dionysus pleading with Nicaea the Amazon, with its tedious play on words and all the tinsel of sophistical panegyric (12. 130 ff.). But his isolation, the scarcity of writers who would undertake such a task, the dreadful dearth of poets with an inspiration and ardor so sustained, give a fictitious value to Nonnus. He had enthusiasm, imagination, facility, and an animation wholly lacking to Quintus of Smyrna. He abounds in new words, bold phrases, and metaphors that are often merely grotesque. His preference for dactyls amounted to mania and robbed the hexameter of its traditional stateliness, so that the very liveliness, the singing effect of his verse, becomes monotonous after a few pages.[1] Some time after the composition of the *Dionysiaca*, Nonnus was converted to Christianity, and made a paraphrase in verse of *St. John's Gospel* which survives with his epic.

Nonnus had his imitators. Tryphiodorus wrote a *Sack of Ilios* in 691 hexameters, which is extant, and we have the *Rape of Helen* (nearly 400 verses) by Coluthus. Both of these poets were, like Nonnus, Egyptian Greeks. Literature would have lost nothing had their works disappeared. But there was one poet of the school of Nonnus who surpassed his master. This was MUSAEUS, of whose life and precise date we know nothing. The scholars of the Renaissance, like the poet Marlowe, identified him with the legendary Athenian seer whom Vergil describes, in the sixth Book of the *Aeneid*, as the center of an admiring throng in the underworld. But the writer of *Hero and Leander*, a brief

Musaeus

[1] Of the 32 varieties of Homeric hexameter, La Roche has shown that Nonnus used only 9; Apollonius had used 27. Nonnus shows a decided preference for making the word accent coincide, in the last foot, with the ictus. In the choliambics of Babrius, this practice is the rule, and, in his case, is no doubt due to the influence of the Latin skazon. Later, with the Byzantines, accent seems to have been regularly taken into account in metrical composition.

idyllic epic of 343 verses, was a close imitator of Nonnus, and may be placed with fair certainty early in the sixth century A.D. and identified with the Musaeus to whom Procopius of Gaza, the sophist, wrote one of 163 *Letters* preserved under his name among the remains of the epistolographers. The story of Hero the maiden, living in her lonely tower of Sestos, and of her lover Leander who swam the Hellespont every night from Abydos, on the opposite coast, had been treated by several Latin poets. Vergil,[1] Ovid, Martial, Lucan, Statius, Ausonius,[2] had all made allusions more or less detailed to the legend, while Ovid included in his elegiac imaginary epistles, the *Heroides*, a letter from Leander to Hero and her reply. But there is little doubt that they all derived the tale from some Alexandrian poem which had made this obscure legend famous, and that, long before Musaeus, Leander was the type of the daring lover who dares once too often, and Hero of the maiden isolated mysteriously in her tower, like the princess of folklore. It was almost certainly Callimachus who, in the lost *Causes*, drew these lovers from the shades of their local saga of Sestos and Abydos. Musaeus would have merited the praise of Callimachus for the brevity and manner of his epic. This is indeed the last Greek poem that may be read with profit, the swan song of the race. Musaeus imitated the metrical effects and, here and there, the actual phrases of Nonnus, but not his rhetorical conceits, his verbosity, his confused digressions, his passion for detail. This straightforward tale is written with a noble and touching simplicity worthy of the earlier days of Greek poetry. The lovers meet at Sestos at a festival, as Simaetha met Delphis in the *Second Idyl* of Theocritus: —

> "Thither resorted many a wandering guest
> To meet their loves; such as had none at all
> Came lovers home from this great festival."[3]

There Leander was only one of many who desired the beauty of the maiden Hero, whose flushed feet were like roses beneath her

[1] *Georgics* 3. 258 ff. [2] *Mosella* 5. 287.
[3] Marlowe, *Hero and Leander* 1.

robe,[1] while all about her was the blush of many roses. In fine contrast with the opening scenes and the swimming of the stormy Hellespont,

> "The roaring sea lamenting to these hours
> Leander's Love and Death,"

is the solitude of the close, when in the dawn after a night of tempest Hero, whose torch had been quenched at the moment of her lover's death, sees his drowned body on the rocks below her tower, and silently, without a word of grief, like a tragic heroine, flings herself down to die on his body. The poem was paraphrased by Schiller who, with less taste, makes Hero utter a dying lament. The whole is Alexandrian in manner, singularly free from the faults of all other Graeco-Roman narrative poetry. It is, in fact, Musaeus, since we have not the Alexandrian original, who has made the fortune of the legend, so that it still appeals to the modern reader: —

> "I never think of poor Leander's fate
> And how he swam, and how his bride sat late,
> And watched the dreadful dawning of the light,
> But as I would of two that died last night.
> So might they now have lived, and so have died;
> The story's heart to me still beats against its side."[2]

Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, finished by Chapman, is a long and elaborate poem in which he rather rewrote than paraphrased "divine Musaeus." An incomplete poem on the river Alpheius in the *Anthology*[3] so closely echoes the phrases of Musaeus that it must have been a direct imitation.

Elegiac poetry was maintained in those gleanings after the harvest preserved in the *Anthology*. They are for the most part pretty trifles, *nugae*. Philodemus of Gadara, the Epicurean philosopher, the friend of Piso the consul (58 B.C.), lived at Rome and was admired for his learning, which placed him above the Greeklings who crowded the capital. We have thirty-two of his

[1] 90. [2] Leigh Hunt. [3] 9. 362.

epigrams, nearly all on erotic subjects. It is to be supposed that they reflect the taste of his Roman patrons rather than his own habits, for his philosophic writings are austere and dry enough. They were included in the *Anthology*, not by Meleager, the fellow-townsman of Philodemus, but by Philip of Thessalonica, who in the first century A.D. made a collection of modern poets. He was perhaps the first to use the title 'Anthology.' To Meleager's *Garland*, Philip added an appendix containing nearly eighty of his own epigrams, chiefly rhetorical exercises displaying little originality. He included even Roman poets who wrote in Greek, such as the accomplished Marcellus and Germanicus. Antipater, whom Philip added to his *Anthology*, was a Greekling who came under Roman influence. He imitated both his namesake of Sidon and Leonidas of Tarentum. Crinagoras of Mitylene lived in the first century under the patronage of Augustus. Of his fifty epigrams many are on Roman themes, addressed to the young Marcellus or celebrating the victories of Tiberius.

The epigrammatists

In the reign of Hadrian, STRATO of Sardis not only contributed about one hundred epigrams to the *Anthology*, but himself made the collection represented by Book 12 of the *Palatine Anthology*. All of these are erotic. About forty epigrams are preserved under the name of LUCIAN of Samosata, chiefly satiric verse, epigrams in the modern sense, and none of them certainly from the hand of Lucian.

In the sixth century, under Justinian, two friends, AGATHIAS, the anthologist and historian, and PAULUS SILENTIARIUS, the 'Silentiary' or privy councilor, exchanged epigrams, the former from his country house on the Bosphorus, while Paulus attended to his duties at the court in Constantinople. Agathias wrote the epigram which inspired Jonson's lyric, "Drink to me only with thine eyes": *I am no winebibber; but if thou wilt make me drunk, taste thou first and bring it to me, and I take it. For if thou wilt touch it with thy lips, no longer is it easy to keep sober or to escape the sweet cupbearer; for the*

Agathias and Paulus

cup ferries me over a kiss from thee, and tells me of the grace that it had.[1]

Paulus was the better poet of the two, and his epigrams, to the number of more than seventy, are among the best of this later period. His is the curious dialogue in which a dead man in his grave attempts to confide in an indifferent wayfarer who waves every assertion aside: —

> My name's — *What matter?* and my home — *I care not.*
> My birth was noble — *What if it were not?*
> Glory I won — *What boots it in the tomb?*
> And here I lie — *Who says so, and to whom?*[2]

In the epigrams after Meleager, with few exceptions, there is a decided falling off. In them we can trace the euphuism of the day, and the trivial effects of sophistic rhetoric from which a true poet would have shaken himself free. Any striking incident that could be used appears again and again in these epigrams, each ingenious versifier trying to outdo the rest in metrical subtleties, and in giving fresh turns to the old commonplaces. All were imitators, whose favorite model was an Alexandrian, Leonidas of Tarentum.

Babrius

Babrius, if we may judge from his name, was an Italian by birth. His date is quite uncertain, but probably falls in the reign of Alexander Severus (222–235 A.D.). He wrote, at any rate, at a time when it was the fashion for a Roman to compose in Greek, as, in our day, certain English and American writers prefer French to their native tongue. It was, moreover, a surer way to the patronage of the phil-Hellenic emperors. The immortality of the *Mythiambics* of Babrius was secured by their popularity as a school book. They seem to be paraphrases in verse of some prose collection of fables, probably those of Aesop, that half-legendary figure whom Greek tradition placed in the time of Croesus, while the Greeks proceeded to attach to his name any beast fable with a moral. This tendency is

[1] *Anth. Pal.* 5. 261; Mackail's translation. Jonson used the prose version of Philostratus 355.

[2] Rogers' translation.

especially marked in the plays of Aristophanes. Aesop was the "child's Homer" of the Greeks. What Babrius did was to make such fables easily accessible in verse for use as a schoolbook or for quotation by the sophists, who loved to illustrate their speeches with such apologues. His vocabulary has many Latinisms and half-understood archaisms, such as the affectations of the Alexandrians had made popular. His dialect has an Attic basis with Ionic coloring, and is wholly literary and conventional. His choliambics are akin to the Latin type rather than to the verse of Hipponax or Herodas, a further hint of his Italian origin. The *Mythiambics* became a classic, are constantly quoted by later writers, and have distinct literary merit. But his handling of the beast fable contributes nothing to the history of the origins of folklore, since the fables are highly artificial and sophisticated, well adapted for the declamations for which they were so often to point the moral.

The drama

For two centuries after the short-lived dramas of the Alexandrian Pleiad, Greek tragedies were written by playwrights whose names have survived, here and there, while all the fruits of their industry have perished. In the second century A.D., Lucian could say[1] that new plays were no longer written, at any rate for representation. Of the famous classic plays only the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides still held the stage. The choruses were omitted. Euripides maintained his popularity long after the other two had ceased to please the crowd, and his plays were still acted in the third century. After that date tragedy was almost wholly relegated to the schoolroom, and was replaced by mimes performed with a ballet, and pantomimes in dumb show of some well-known myth.

The permanent contribution of the Alexandrian period had been almost wholly poetical. But in the Christian centuries it is to the writers of prose that one looks for the maintenance of Greek letters. Rome, in the first centuries, was the center of the intellectual life of the world and the source of patronage. In

[1] *Praise of Demosthenes* 27.

proportion as the Roman emperors loved Greek letters, the Greeklings who crowded to Rome prospered, and they wrote for Roman readers no less than for Greek. The historians, following the lead of Polybius, wrote in Greek the history of Rome for Romans, compiling from their predecessors and, as a rule, with little care for style. DIODORUS of Sicily (*circa* 40 B.C.) wrote forty Books of universal history down to Caesar's conquest of Gaul. Of this massive work we have Books 1–5 and 11–20 and some fragments. It was called the *Library of History* (*Bibliotheca*), and in it Diodorus aimed at covering all the events and dates of history from the dawn of time. For his researches he used the libraries of Rome, and himself traveled far and wide. His book was much admired by the Greeks and Romans of his own and later centuries. But he had no independence of view, and slavishly reproduced in abridgment or literally the classical historians for each period. His style is clear and dry, he avoids hiatus, and, like Polybius, uses abstract substantives to excess. Of the few speeches included in the work, the greater number are epideictic and highly rhetorical.

Diodorus

Not long after the battle of Actium (31 B.C.) there came to Rome a citizen of Halicarnassus, the famous DIONYSIUS, there to spend the best years of his literary life ; there, too, he probably died. His reputation depends mainly on his critical essays on the writers of classic Greek prose. But he was a historian, too, and we have his *Early History of Rome* (Books 1–11 and fragments of 12–20), which was completed about 8 B.C. This he wrote partly for the glory of Rome, as a tribute to the distinguished Romans who were his friends, partly as an example of what could still be achieved in Greek prose by one who was the leader in that revival of Atticism which was so soon to defeat the Asianists. His dream was the renaissance of Greek prose through the sincere and sedulous imitation of the classic models, a reaction which, as he admitted, must come through the influence of Rome. The main theme of his history was the grandeur of Rome, and as it covers the mythi-

Dionysius of Halicarnassus

cal past of Rome and Greece, it forms a sort of introduction to the work of Polybius. The chief literary interest of Dionysius was oratory, and no historian ever included so many speeches of famous persons, chiefly epideictic in character and style, and composed with so little care for verisimilitude that he makes Romulus employ all the rhetorical tricks of a Greek sophist. So hard is it for a professional critic to avoid the errors that he would be the first to detect in another. Dionysius had not the gifts of style nor the note of originality that might have lifted his history to the rank of a classic. He is lifeless and monotonous and is burdened with too many reminiscences. His most important contribution was to rhetoric, which he taught, and to the criticism of the orators.

The *First Letter to Ammaeus* is a precious document for the history of literature. A Peripatetic had claimed that Demosthenes owed his oratorical success to the prescriptions of the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle. This worthless paradox provoked Dionysius, who could not endure that his ideal orator should seem to be indebted to a philosopher and not to other orators and rhetoricians, Isocrates, for instance. The facts and dates are in his favor, and his arguments are invaluable evidence for the chronology of Demosthenes and Aristotle. The essay *On the Arrangement of Words* was a birthday gift to a young Roman pupil, a solid treatise, very different from the florid 'birthday speeches' with which the sophists regaled their patrons. This reminds one rather of the numerous *Studies* dedicated to distinguished scholars of our time, though it would not be easy to produce an exact parallel of a modern work dedicated to a pupil. After distinguishing style from subject-matter, Dionysius promises two tracts on style, the second to be on the choice of words, *le mot propre*, while this, the first, deals with the more important question of their effective order, Dryden's "ordonnance." How Herodotus, using the most ordinary vocabulary, succeeded in making that *risqué* anecdote of Candaules and Gyges vivid, and redeemed the scandalous theme by the mere arrangement of

On the Arrangement of Words

the words![1] Then we have the definition of the three harmonies, the 'austere' (*e.g.* Aeschylus, Pindar, Thucydides), the 'smooth' or 'flowery' (Sappho, Isocrates), the 'middle,' a golden mean (Homer, Sophocles, Plato, Demosthenes). Even this professor knows that precepts are not all, and dwells on the need of literary tact. His experiments in style and the numerous quotations in prose and verse greatly heighten the interest of the tract. The attempts of Blass and others to define the rules that govern the rhythms of Demosthenic prose were anticipated by the analysis here made of Demosthenic rhythms (c. 17). Dionysius quotes part of a Pindaric dithyramb, the Danae dirge of Simonides, and, most precious of all, the whole of the Sapphic *Ode to Aphrodite*. R. L. Stevenson had not read Dionysius, but his essay on *Style in Literature*[2] is a close modern parallel to the *Arrangement of Words*.

The tract *On the Ancient Orators* has an introduction, an impassioned attack on Asianism, in which Dionysius declares that that theatrical manner of rhetoric is not for long. He divides the Attic orators into two groups, Lysias, Isocrates, Isaeus, and Demosthenes, Hypereides, Aeschines. Lysias is the model of the perfectly lucid and simple style, the ideal of the Attic purists, among whom Dionysius does not count as an extremist. Isocrates is the type of the elaborate, self-conscious, highly wrought artist, occasionally too copious. Isaeus, too clever to convince, owed two thirds of his reputation to the fact that he trained Demosthenes. The *Letter to Pompeius* is a famous criticism of Plato. Dionysius was a professor first, nervous about extremes, afraid of literary gorgeousness. Hence Plato's grand manner, which he had himself called 'dithyrambic,'[3] was not to be admired without reserve. For Plato's spare and muscular manner he has nothing but praise. The *Second Letter to Ammaeus* is a minute analysis of the style of Thucydides, whose obscurity Dionysius found repellent, preferring, both as a matter of taste and from national prejudice, his countryman Herodotus. This tract has a linguistic rather than a literary

[1] 3. [2] *Contemporary Review*, 1885. [3] *Phaedrus* 238 D.

interest, while another, *On Thucydides*, is a comprehensive estimate of the historian, to whom he had devoted part of the *Letter to Pompeius*. Dionysius was the first to write for the use of the Atticists a set treatise *On Imitation*. This we have in part only, some quotations made by Dionysius himself in his *Letter to Pompeius*, and fragments of an epitome by a later hand. These fragments used to be classified as *Criticism of the Classic Writers* under the name of Dionysius. The *Art of Rhetoric* is now held to be spurious on the score of language and doctrine.

A literary critic of the first water Dionysius is not. But he was a thorough scholar, an enthusiast with correct taste, and as such a rare apparition in his day. He writes, not with the infallibility and impartiality of an Aristotle, but with an *idée fixe*, the perfection of Demosthenes, which left him with a certain coldness to other prose writers. His mind was set on the orators, and his criticisms, the judgment of an educated Greek who had hardly a trace of the Greekling, are indispensable for the study of the history of Greek prose.

Strabo

Strabo, who was born about 60 B.C. on the shore of the Pontus, may be admitted among the historians, since his political and physical *Geography* has a decided historical value. He was a highly educated and much-traveled man, proud of his native place, yet a true cosmopolitan. At Rome, where he came about 20 B.C. to enjoy the blessings of the peace established by Augustus, he must have spent several years, and his work was intended to be of use to Roman readers. He wrote as a cultivated amateur who took no interest in the professional quarrels of the Asianists and Atticists and modeled his style on no classic writer. He avoids hiatus, but not with strictness, and uses many un-Attic words and constructions. Apart from the interest of his descriptive *Geography* of Europe, Asia, Egypt, and Libya in seventeen Books (of which nearly the whole survives), we owe to him countless citations from the Greek and Alexandrian classics. He wrote a *History* as a sequel to the work of Polybius, from 146 B.C. down to the first years of the Empire. This is lost.

One other name must be added to this incomplete list of the historians who flourished in the first Christian century under the favor of Rome. JOSEPHUS was born in 37 A.D. at Jerusalem, and received the education of a Jew, not like that of the Hellenized Jews of Alexandria, of whom his older contemporary Philo, the "Jewish Plato" (20 B.C.–40 A.D.) is the best representative. For Josephus learned Greek late in life in order to translate his masterpiece the *History of the Jewish War* for the benefit of non-Semitic readers. In this task he required the help of others. In the *History* he tells the story of the revolt of the Jews and their repression by Titus (66–70 A.D.). After his capture as a prisoner of war he had become the friend of Vespasian and Titus, and was present as an eyewitness when the latter sacked Jerusalem in 70. The latter part of his life he spent in Rome. Like Polybius, he was pro-Roman, and played a very similar part as mediator between the Romans and his own countrymen. His later work, completed in 94 A.D., the *Early History of Judaea*, from the Creation to 66 A.D., is less interesting and less vigorous than the narrative of events of which he himself was a part.

Josephus

Dionysius, in the early years of the Roman Empire, judged of the prospects of historical prose from such writers as Polybius, whose style did not encourage one to read him to the end. He saw that it was to the Atticizing rhetoricians that one must look for the revival of Greek prose and the return to Attic models. In the following century, in the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian and the phil-Hellenic Antonines, the Atticizing revival bore fruit for historical prose. Dionysius, could he have read him, would have found much to approve in ARRIAN (*circa* 95–175). Born in Nicomedia, a successful governor of Cappadocia under Hadrian, Arrian was an Atticist at heart. After an active military career, he became a citizen of Athens, conspicuous for wealth and public spirit, and there wrote his *History of the Anabasis of Alexander* (in seven Books) which has come down to us almost complete. It covers the years 336–323 B.C. Arrian was an industrious writer, a geographer as well as a historian. He

Arrian

was a devoted disciple of the philosopher Epictetus who, like another Socrates, himself wrote nothing. Epictetus, a lame Phrygian, while a slave at Rome, educated himself and became one of the most famous teachers of the Stoic school. When Domitian banished the philosophers (94 A.D.) he retreated to Nicopolis in Epirus, where Arrian heard him teach. It was open to every Stoic, as to every Epicurean, to make his own personal application to life of the doctrines of his school. The exaltation of the human will is the preoccupation of Epictetus. All the Stoics taught the virtue of self-sufficiency, but not with such insistence. He was an emphatic teacher, and his strongest emphasis is laid on all that concerns the freedom of the soul, its independence of externals. For him all progress lies in the strengthening of one's power to work out one's own principles of conduct. The teaching of Epictetus strongly influenced Marcus Aurelius, but where the ex-slave is cheerful and even optimistic, the emperor is coldly and piously resigned. Epictetus addressed himself to all classes of men, was possessed by the thought of his mission, and disdained no sort of practical advice and exhortation. Marcus Aurelius communed only with himself, in regions of self-denying austerity remote from the trials of common men. Mindful of the pious tribute of Xenophon in the *Memorabilia*, Arrian wrote out the *Lectures* and *Discourses* of Epictetus and a *Manual* (Enchiridion) of his teaching. The two latter are extant, and on them we depend for our knowledge of the doctrines of Epictetus. Arrian pushed the parallel with Xenophon further, borrowed his titles, prided himself on the close resemblance of their careers and tastes, and won the title of the New Xenophon. He wrote treatises on *Tactics* and *Hunting*, the latter a continuation of the *Cynegeticus*, which he evidently regarded as Xenophontic. His work *On India* was written in Ionic, in imitation of Herodotus. Arrian is the chameleon among the Atticizing historians; he wrote in close imitation now of Xenophon, now of Thucydides, and again of Herodotus. But few Atticists were as consistent as he, or as unspoiled by the rhetoric of his day.

Appian

Appian of Alexandria, Arrian's contemporary, was a successful advocate at Rome under Hadrian and Antoninus and was raised by the latter, through the influence of Fronto, the tutor of Marcus Aurelius, to the post of procurator. He is a man of one book, his *Roman History*, the work of his mature years. An autobiography, to which he refers in his preface, is lost. His ambitious *History* extended from the mythical centuries of Rome to the reign of Trajan. Instead of writing annals, the story of Rome year by year, he arranged his twenty-four Books in divisions, after the manner of Ephorus, grouping together all the events that illustrated the relations of Rome with other nations, or her own civil struggles, so that the reader had before him a comprehensive survey in a single Book of the wars in Italy (2), the Spanish wars (6), the civil wars (13–21). Of all this we have the Preface, with its description of the countries and nations controlled by the vast Empire of Rome, excerpts from 1–5, almost the whole of 6–8, the latter half of 9, and the whole of 11–17, so that the work ends, for us, before the close of the civil wars, at 34 B.C. Appian is a historian of the school of Polybius, but his work, owing to its plan, lacks unity and coherence. The most valuable portion that has survived is the section on the civil wars. He was a born compiler, with no critical gift. What his sources actually were is still an open question, but he seems to have owed much to the numerous minor historians, both Latin and Greek, whose works have perished. His style is clear and not remarkable for any attempt at Atticism. He included few speeches, and those have little that is purely epideictic. Arrian was, indeed, free from the conspicuous faults of sophistic rhetoric.

Cassius Dio

Cassius Dio, grandson of the orator Dio of Prusa (Chrysostomus), was born at Nicaea in Bithynia. He came to Rome in 180 and held the offices of praetor and consul. Under Alexander Severus he was proconsul of Africa. After his second consulship (229) he withdrew from public life to Nicaea. Of his great work, the *History of Rome*, from Aeneas to 229 A.D., in eighty Books, we have, besides fragments and an

eleventh-century epitome, Books 36–60 (from 68 B.C. to 47 A.D.). He is a valuable authority for the last years of the Roman Republic, though for the civil wars Appian is a safer guide. Dio spent ten years in collecting his material from the Greek and Latin historians of Rome. He ranks among the Atticists and took Thucydides for his model, especially for his speeches, which are numerous and long. He could not resist the temptation to be epideictic, and is too often carried away into excess of antithesis, parallelisms, similar endings, and other rhetorical devices.

The first and second centuries produced more than one biographer whose writings are the fringe of history. PLUTARCH of Chaeronea in Boeotia was born about 50 A.D. He was of good stock, and the glimpses that he gives us of his family and connections at Chaeronea reveal conditions highly favorable for the production of a well-bred and amiable moralist. Plutarch was no Greekling. After his studies at Athens, where he certainly was in 66 A.D., he paid more than one visit to Rome and became intimate with several distinguished Romans. **Plutarch** He gave lectures in Greek to Roman audiences. But he never took the trouble to master Latin thoroughly, and did not depend on Roman patronage. He never expatriated himself, and lived at Chaeronea, which, as he said, could not afford to lose a single citizen. In his old age he devoted himself to the priestly service at Delphi, thus setting the seal on a long life of scrupulous piety. Of the date of his death we know knothing, but there is evidence that he was still alive in 120. Agathias in the *Anthology* says of him that he wrote the 'Lives' of many, but found none to write his own.

Plutarch is best known by the work which, in translations, has endeared him to generations of French and English readers, the *Parallel Lives* of famous Greeks and Romans. As we have it, it lacks some of the *Lives* and several of the comparisons which he made of the Greeks and Romans. **The Lives** These he had paired together, Alexander and Julius Caesar, Theseus and Romulus, Demosthenes and Cicero, and the rest. We possess

forty-eight *Lives*, including four, Artaxerxes, Aratus, Galba, and Otho, which were written singly. Plutarch was a true hero worshiper, and he chose for his heroes men who had distinguished themselves in public life, ignoring the mere man of letters. He is no historian. In any case, the Greeks of the best period were singularly incurious about the private lives and personalities of their great men, so that he could only fall back on tradition for his personal anecdotes. He saves his credit by reminding us that he writes, not history, but biography, and he might have maintained that his fallible chronology, his weakness for the picturesque rather than the prosaic version of the incident, did not impair the moral lesson that he wished to convey and that he made vivid by abundant anecdotes and dramatic situations. The individual, his peculiar temperament and characteristics, stood out clear for Plutarch, but he often failed to understand, much more to allow for, the political background of his personages. Tact and skill in narrative he had, variety and a strong sense of the dramatic. So it was that Shakespeare found in North's translation of the *Lives* dramas like *Coriolanus* or *Julius Caesar* ready made. Plutarch's *Lives* are rich in scenes of pathos or dramatic intensity, the defeated Crassus at Carrhae, Cleopatra raising to her tower the wounded Antony, the triumph of Aemilius Paulus, the farewell of Brutus and Portia, the death scenes of Pericles, Caesar, Brutus and Cato. He has been called the Greek Montaigne, and the vitality and never failing humanity, the genial wisdom that made Plutarch so sympathetic to Montaigne himself, as he read him in the French version of Amyot, has won him countless readers who hardly know so much as the names of the other literary Greeks of his century. The rest need to be galvanized into life, but the cheerful and many sided Plutarch will hardly need that perpetual rediscovery "from time to time as long as books last" promised to him by Emerson.

He was before all else "naturally moral." The eighty odd essays and dialogues, Montaigne's "cream of philosophy" which we have under his name, are all moral and didactic in aim, so that they are regularly classed together as *Moralia*. Many of them

have been rejected outright by modern scholars, and several lie under suspicion. Like most of the intellectuals of his day, Plutarch drew his ethics from Plato and Aristotle, and it was the Platonic example that led him to write the fourteen authentic dialogues that we possess. Of these *On the Cessation of Oracles* is one of the most interesting, with its narrative of the proclamation of the death of the great god Pan by the Egyptian mariner. The incident was related to prove that the Daemons were mortal, since even a deity could die![1]

The Moralia

The *Table Talk* in four Books is a series of discussions on all manner of questions, philosophical, antiquarian, literary, questions of social demeanor, and diet, and natural history. Plutarch's father, brothers, and grandfather take part in certain of these lively discussions, which are held at Athens, or Delphi, or at the Games in Elis or Corinth. Among the literary essays that *On the Malice of Herodotus* displays the natural prejudice of a Boeotian against one who had so severely criticised the conduct of the Boeotians in the Persian Wars, unless, indeed, we regard the piece as a rhetorical exercise of a sort common in the schools. In the *Comparison of Aristophanes and Menander*, Plutarch expressed his own decided preference for Menander, natural in one who disliked extravagance of all kinds, even in Comedy. He hated the Epicureans, and attacked them in *Against Colotes* (an Epicurean), and in a dialogue whose thesis was that *One cannot live pleasantly according to the Epicurean fashion.* In his essays he often attacks superstition and he was uncritically pious. But he popularized a doctrine that is itself highly superstitious, the theory of Daemons, intermediary beings, bad and good, whom he made responsible for all the apparent errors of the gods. This was an effort to purify Greek theology and to justify the ways of god to man.

Plutarch was no strict Atticist, though as a well-read man he is, of course, prone to Attic constructions and vocabulary. For the most part he avoids hiatus, though he ridicules its too careful

[1] Mrs. Browning, in her explanation of her poem, *The Dead Pan*, gives Plutarch as her authority, but misquotes his version.

exclusion as pedantic.[1] He abounds in quotations from the classical Greeks and Alexandrians, and his fondness for quoting poetry amounts to a defect of style. He could not, of course, remain outside the current of sophistic, and when he taught at Rome, he gave declamations like the rest. His *Whether Fire or Water is more Useful* is a typical epideictic piece; the *Gryllus*, a dialogue of Odysseus with one of Circe's swine, is a paradoxical encomium, while the very arrangement of the *Lives* in parallels suggests the sophistic practice. Later he shows little trace of the influence of rhetoric. His style is rather massive than graceful, and he has a weakness for abstract substantives. Like Aristotle, he is one of the very few Greek writers of importance who profit by translation. He disliked Asianism and all affectation in writing, as a form of excess, and ridiculed equally the rigorous Atticist who would rather go cold in winter than wear wool not Attic, but preferred to sit inactive in the fine and threadbare cloak of Lysianic speech.[2]

Of the numerous historians of the schools of philosophy, anxious in each case to preserve a record of an unbroken succession of scholarchs, one has survived. The *Lives of the Philosophers* of DIOGENES LAERTIUS (probably so called because he came from Laerte in Cilicia) has no literary or critical merit, but few books have been more quoted for their facts. What gave the book a vitality denied to others of its type is the fact that he surveyed the whole field of philosophy, combining all the separate records and traditions of the schools in one handbook. His sources are still debated, and we are uncertain as to his method of using them. He had before him numerous histories of the schools, lists of scholarchs, and collections of notable sayings with which he helped out his own meager resources. As he has nothing to say about Neo-Platonism, and mentions the successor of the second-century Sextus Empiricus, his date probably falls in the first half of the third century. The *Lives* are in ten Books: 1–2 the

Diogenes Laertius

[1] The use of hiatus is, therefore, no safe criterion for the genuineness of his writings.

[2] *How to Listen* 9.

pre-Socratics and Socrates; 3 Plato; 4 the Academy; 5 Aristotle and his successors; 6 the Cynics; 7 the Stoics; 8 the Pythagoreans; 9 Heracleitus, Eleatics, and Skeptics; 10 Epicurus. His own preference was for Epicureanism. The book was written for some woman of rank whose name has not been preserved.

In the second century A.D., though Rome was the source of all patronage, the center of politics and active life through which flowed every current of human interests, Greece held her own as the shrine of past greatness and the birthplace of the arts. With the Greek tongue, literature, and monuments every man of education must be familiar. There were few Romans of position who did not spend some part of their student life in Greece. To meet the demand, which must have been considerable, for a handbook of Greek geography and monuments, PAUSANIAS, the topographer, wrote his *Tour in Greece*, a description in ten Books of the greater part of European Greece. It is packed with information which even then cannot have been easily accessible, a storehouse of topography, traditions, and descriptions of things worth notice. No serious traveler or archaeologist in Attica, Corinth, Messenia, Elis, Achaea, Arcadia, Boeotia, or Phocis could, in our day, dispense with the *Tour* of Pausanias, and it is safe to say that its greatest vogue began with the nineteenth century. He describes, not only the ancient monuments, but those that were due to the Roman emperors. He either implies or states that he saw all that he mentions, and though this is taken with a grain of salt to-day, he has never been convicted of bad faith. That he was writing his book in 173 A.D. may be gathered from a historical reference.[1] His style is careless and free from the rhetorical manner. But no one will quarrel with the style of a work which has proved to be indispensable in the great task of excavating the material remains of Greece, and his numerous omissions and errors might be forgiven if only for the sake of a single debt out of the many to his credit, the discovery of the tombs of Mycenae, for which Schliemann depended on the second Book of the *Tour*.

Pausanias

[1] 5. 1. 2.

It seems fairly safe to ascribe to the second century A.D. a tract which, by manuscript tradition, was long falsely given to Demetrius of Phalerum, the friend of Theophrastus. The evidence for the later date of the essay *On Style* is both linguistic and chronological, drawn from actual references in the work, including a quotation from Demetrius of Phalerum himself. The name of the writer may well have been Demetrius, which would at least account for the manuscript confusion. *On Style*, or *How to write Prose*, is clearly Peripatetic in origin, and shows the influence of the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle. But the writer is more concerned than Aristotle with actual modes of expression, the structure of the sentence, definitions of the clause (colon), the phrase (komma, hence the 'kommatic' style, of such a writer as Hegesias), and of the period. Four kinds of style are distinguished, the plain, elevated, elegant, and forcible, and the vice of each described. The use of the dual betrays the Atticist. The author was, however, no purist. His style is lucid and concise.

Demetrius On Style

Far more important for the history of criticism than these analytical subtleties is the aesthetic treatise *On the Sublime*, to give it its traditional title, though *On the Grand Style* would convey the Greek word ὕψος more precisely to the modern reader. To this treatise we have referred now and again under the name of Longinus. Yet it may be taken for granted that it was not written by that Cassius Longinus who at the court of Palmyra, in the third Christian century, was the minister of Queen Zenobia, and as her adviser fell a victim to the Emperor Aurelian (273 A.D.).[1] Longinus was indeed a learned man, described by the fourth-century Eunapius as 'a living library and walking museum,' and it will be long before his name is thoroughly

Pseudo-Longinus On the Sublime

[1] Mr. Churton Collins, however, in a recent essay, maintains that Longinus, the rhetorician of Palmyra, should not be robbed of the credit of the work on the evidence that has so far been brought forward. See his *Longinus and Greek Criticism* in *Studies in Poetry and Criticism*, London, 1905. Wilamowitz, in *Hermes* 35, 49, places the essay in the first half of the first century, A.D.

dissociated from the essay *On the Sublime*, even as Homer's clings to the *Odyssey*. Mr. Roberts himself, who denies his authorship, labels his book 'Longinus.' The first suspicion was aroused in 1808, when there was discovered on a Vatican manuscript of the treatise the ascription 'Longinus *or* Dionysius.' The manner of the work is wholly alien from that of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and the manuscript evidence so far indicates, if anything, that *On the Sublime* was anonymous for the copyist of that day. No writer later than the first century is quoted, but little is to be gathered from the argument from silence. The work is never mentioned by any Graeco-Roman writer. In atmosphere it suits the first century A.D. But it is a singularly detached work, written by one who was unlike all his tribe, unlike those Alexandrian philological critics, who, as Pope said, had all the accomplishments "except spirit, taste, and sense"; unlike Dionysius, who put his faith in imitation; still more unlike the genial moralist Plutarch, whose name has been attached to the treatise by certain desperate critics. Its writer is, what Aristotle was not, one of the very few inspired aesthetic critics whom the history of literature can show. Caecilius, probably the Atticizing friend of Dionysius, had written on 'the Sublime,' and Longinus, as the author may be called for convenience, sets out to improve on that attempt. *A literary judgment*, said he, *is the last fruit of long toil*, but it was not mere labor so much as inspired tact that made his work a masterpiece of criticism. In describing the qualities of the grand style he quotes from the Greek and Latin classics and even from the Hebrew scriptures, setting together the words of Moses: *Let there be light*, and the great passage in the *Iliad* where Ajax, baffled by the mist, cries in despair to Zeus: *In the light slay us, since it is thy good will that we die.*[1] This is followed by a famous comparison of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and the analysis of the Sapphic *Ode to Anactoria*, that 'congress of the passions,' which survives only by reason of its quotation here. Thought, passion, figures, and diction, those beautiful words which he calls the *life of the spirit*, all the elements of the grand style

[1] c. 9.

are surveyed with no precise system, the lack of order being increased for us by the frequent mutilations of the treatise. In dealing with the 'faultless' writers, 'Longinus' shows his gift for criticism by asserting that genius is far removed from faultlessness, and preferring a Pindar to a Bacchylides, a Homer to an Apollonius. His final test of the sublime is that it must be found to please at all times and in all countries — *quod semper, quod ubique*. Like Quintilian, he deplores the scarcity of true eloquence in his own day, but ascribes it less to the decay of liberty than to the corroding influence of the love of money and pleasure which produces triviality in the soul. The Roman Tacitus had said as much in his *Dialogus on Orators*. The authorship of the essay matters little. It stands alone, unspoiled by pedantry, the judgment of one who could be trusted to make his test of literature the pleasure that results. He assumed that, given the pleasure and the judicious reader, all the rest, the moral teaching, whatever may be demanded, will be added. He was, as Pope calls him, an "ardent judge," this "bold Longinus," and he appeals afresh in every generation to the enthusiast, who must, however, be serious and sincere, well balanced, undisturbed by the passing fads and affectations of literature.

Dionysius saw the signs of a genuine revival of oratory due to the imitation of the best Greek models through the invigorating influence of Rome, as though the fact that the Romans were tasteful critics might be enough to inspire Greeks with true eloquence, after Roman dominion had crushed their political life. He was himself a leader in the reaction to Attic style through imitation, the only effective weapon against the Asianists, to whose empirical methods he opposes, like a second Isocrates, his 'philosophical' rhetoric which was to be both artistic and scientific. He set up Hegesias as the *bête noire* of the Atticists, the model of what to avoid. But he did not count with the rigorous purists, whose model must be Lysias. Each to his choice, and it was for the purists that his friend Caecilius of Calacte composed his *Attic Lexicon*. That was one of the first signs of the hyper-

The New Sophistic

Atticism which Lucian ridicules in his *Lexiphanes* and the *Guide to Rhetoric*. Atticism of all shades gained the day, and when we come to the revival of rhetoric known as the New Sophistic, we find that most of the sophists are Atticists and swear by some Attic prose model, playing "the sedulous ape" as Stevenson said of his own initiation into the writer's craft. This revival was marked by the foundation, by Antoninus Pius (138–161 A.D.), of salaried chairs of rhetoric, whose holders, whether at Rome, Athens, or the provincial towns which often maintained public chairs of their own, were regarded with the profoundest deference and were often sent on diplomatic missions. Thus did the phil-Hellenism of Hadrian and the Antonines spur the vanity of the Greeks to fresh efforts in the only literary activity that was popular in their day, the epideictic speech. The rhetoricians had long controlled education, and all of them taught; rhetoric stood for the humanities; so that epideictic eloquence was really the display of the talents of professors.

The second-century sophists

The second-century sophists have been made vivid to us by the *Lives* of Philostratus, an Athenian sophist of the third century. His lively sketches show us precisely what this revival was worth, how public declamation had become a fashionable sport for which one trained the voice and gestures and wore the uniform of an exquisite, laboring on every detail that could impress the enraptured audience, who cared little whether the speech was in praise of baldness, or an address of welcome to the emperor, or any one of the twenty-seven varieties of epideictic speech named by Menander the rhetorician, in the third or fourth century,[1] in his essay on this important type. Only their favorite must be in good voice and round his elaborate periods with the smile that showed him a master of the game. Philostratus opens his list with Nicetes of Smyrna, who appeared in Nerva's reign as a showy declaimer, Asianic enough to have grieved Dionysius, if we may judge from this brief sketch. Many of these hungry Greeklings were, no doubt, geography apart, of an Asianism deplorably

[1] Bursian, *Der Rhetor Menander*, Munich, 1882.

florid. But it is a mistake to regard, with Rohde, the New Sophistic as simply a renaissance of that Asianism which to Dionysius had seemed a lost cause. When, in the fifth century, Gorgias had set up prose as the rival of poetry, he borrowed poetry's weapons, and the *baroque* style which resulted became the natural manner of the more florid epideictic declaimers, even of those who may be put in the category of the Atticists.

Declamation had by now supplanted every type of poetry, the religious hymn, the marriage song, the triumphal ode, and, as though to mark the usurpation, the sophists used the terminology of poetry. They 'sang' their 'songs' as they called their declamations, and the audience would beat time to their rhythms. The pomp and prodigality of the life led even a rich man like HERODES ATTICUS (100–175 A.D.) to declaim and teach declaimers. He prided himself less on his splendid patronage of the arts and the stadium of white marble that he gave to Athens than on the 'easy flow' of language, the gift of improvisation that made him the 'tongue of the Hellenes.' Of all his glittering eloquence we have one short and unimportant speech, a fictitious oration against Macedonia, a smooth and careful composition from which we can gather little of the character of his many-sided eloquence. We have two declamations of the famous Polemon on two heroes of Marathon. But they have lost their savor and merely betray what we should know without documents — that the sophists of the second century had nothing to say. No doubt the style of their improvisations was very different. ARISTEIDES, the pupil of Herodes (129–189 A.D.), does indeed survive in fifty-five *Orations*, perhaps because, not possessing the gifts of a public speaker, he depended, like Isocrates, on his readers. Atticism had been a mania with Herodes, and Aristeides made himself one of the most correct writers of the day. He lived long at Smyrna, where he upheld the banner of pure Attic against the solecists. He aimed at using no word that did not come from books, but his practice, as with all these purists, lagged behind his theory. He was proverbially unpopular as a teacher of

Herodes Atticus

Aristeides

rhetoric, though for the later sophists, such as Themistius in the fourth century, he was to rank with Demosthenes as a model of Greek prose. Yet his monody on Smyrna after an earthquake[1] has all the mint marks of Asianism, even short, jerky sentences, in strong contrast with his regular periodic style.

In the list of sophists who were also philosophers, Philostratus placed Dio, surnamed 'Chrysostomus,' the 'Golden-mouthed.' Born at Prusa in Bithynia about 40 A.D., in rank and condition a sort of Asiatic Plutarch, he was for part of his life at least a professed sophist, wrote paradoxical panegyrics of a parrot, a gnat, and hair,[2] according to the prevailing fashion, and in an extant speech proves ingeniously that Troy was never taken by the Greeks.[3] But he was made of sterner stuff than Herodes and his fellows. Banished as a suspect by Domitian, he wandered in exile for fourteen years, acquiring a peculiar knowledge of the towns on the north coast of the Black Sea and of the savage Getae, whose history he wrote. This work is lost, but we have eighty speeches (essays would often be the more correct title), partly moral lectures which he delivered both during and after his exile, which ended in 96 with the accession of his friend Nerva.

Dio of Prusa

To lecture thus from town to town was like those 'God-forsaken sophists' whom Dio denounces. His aim, however, was very different from theirs. They regularly came to praise. But Dio's addresses are often sermons, direct admonitions aimed at definite abuses, in which he spares the vanity of his hearers no more than a modern revivalist, and we may picture him delivering them to huge audiences who heard with gusto these graceful harangues, full of classical allusions and scathing references, to their frivolity, if they were Alexandrians,[4] to their curious habit of snoring, even when awake, if of Tarsus,[5] if Rhodians[6] their parsimony and vandalism in making over old statues. In another category are the dozen Bithynian speeches addressed to Trajan about the time when Pliny was an official in that province, so that we can compare the point

[1] *Oration* 20. [2] Synesius replied in praise of baldness.
[3] *Oration* 11 (Arnim). [4] 32. [5] 33, 34. [6] 31.

of view of a Roman functionary and a born Bithynian. In his *Euboean Tale*, or *The Hunter*, is a charming idyl of country life on a farm near the coast of Euboea where he had been shipwrecked. Dio compares at every point the simple manner of his kindly hosts in the hollows of Euboea, the courtship of two rustic lovers, the abundance of food and drink, with all the drawbacks of town life, so that here, too, this born preacher may point his moral. The whole is perhaps fiction, a moral tale. Elsewhere he describes life at Borysthenes on the north shore of the Black Sea, a settlement where Greeks were surrounded by Scythian barbarians. He finds them talking bad Greek but devoted to Homer, highly sensitive to any criticism of their adored poet, and eager to listen to a speech from Dio on monarchy, so rare is the sight of an educated stranger in those parts.[1] Dio labeled himself philosopher, and he was one of Plutarch's type, who borrowed the best from all the schools while belonging definitely to none. He had excellent taste in imitation, writing the 'plain' style, and avoiding by his geniality of temperament the cold correctness of an Aristeides. Xenophon and Plato were his favorite models, and next to Lucian he is the most successful, the most pleasing to read of all the imitative writers of his age. To 'write better than Dio' was evidently considered high praise by Epictetus.[2]

Among the very few writers who rose superior to the glitter of sophistic in his own composition, though he was a generous patron of the profession, is Marcus Aurelius (121–180 A.D.). *To Himself* (the title, though awkward, is literal and so to be preferred to the traditional *Meditations*), in twelve Books, was probably written down from day to day, the record of a soul conversing with itself, with no thought of other eyes. The mood and matter are everything, and it would be impertinent to search for graces of style in this famous work of edification, the Greek counterpart of the *Imitation of Christ*. This last great Stoic wrote indeed with as little care for effect as any other of his school. His Greek, the tongue everywhere of the

Marcus Aurelius To Himself

[1] *Oration* 36. [2] 3. 23. 17.

educated, was acquired, and is rugged and abrupt, crowded with Latinisms. Where it is the nobility of thought alone that lends impressiveness, at least nothing is lost in translation: *Picture, for instance, the times of Vespasian — there you see folk marrying, rearing children, falling sick, dying, warring, feasting, trading, farming, flattering, pushing, suspecting, plotting, praying for deaths, grumbling at fate, loving, amassing, coveting consulships or crowns. Yet, where now is all that restless life? . . . So likewise scan the many registers of ages and of nations; see how hard they strove, how fast they fell, and were resolved into the elements. Above all dwell in retrospect on those whom you yourself have seen straining after vanities, instead of following out the law of their own being, and clinging tight to that, resting content.*[1] So Marcus Aurelius to himself. One passage is like all the rest, the calm self-admonition of a being too dignified for confession, who in the latter years of an ascetic life sees the vanity of all striving save for the approval of one's own soul, the 'inward guide.' He was most akin to Epictetus, and the journal is steeped in the Stoic philosopher's language and thought. 'The most human of all books,' as Renan called *To Himself*, has no literary merit, but it lives and speaks with a voice to men, while no sophist of them all is known beyond the pale of the specialists.

It is singular enough that a Roman emperor should close the long line of Pagans whose moral reflections still stir the imagination. But it is still more strange that a Syrian of the lower class should, about the same time, set the high-water mark of what was achieved in Greek literature in all the Graeco-Roman centuries, and appear as "the last great master of Attic eloquence and Attic wit." LUCIAN of Samosata in Syria (*circa* 125–200 A.D.) was born in poverty. He was apprenticed to an uncle who was a statuary. But the trade did not set his genius, and he managed somehow to pick up an education by wandering from one to another of the great cities of Ionia, which had once claimed Homer and cradled the earliest philosophers, but now

Lucian

[1] 4. 32; Rendall's translation.

disputed the possession of the most showy declaimers. Lucian set out to qualify himself for a career so profitable. Meanwhile he was Hellenizing himself to good purpose, so that his Syrian dialect fell from him and was to leave no traces on his writings. For a short time he was an advocate at Antioch, but that original and buoyant spirit was not to be tamed to any sober profession, and we find him following the life of a declaimer, now in Greece or Italy, now holding a lucrative chair of rhetoric in Gaul. We find him at Antioch in 163 on the occasion of a visit of Lucius Verus, the colleague of Marcus Aurelius, and after a triumphant return to his native Samosata he settled in Athens, finding the atmosphere there more congenial and less Philistine than at Rome, if we may judge from his comparison of the two cities in the *Nigrinus*, and his assertion of the aesthetic superiority of Athens. In Athens he wrote the works that made him famous beyond the common lot of sophists. In his essay, *The Dependent Scholar*, he gave us the *locus classicus* for the miseries of the hungry Greeklings who were the hangers-on of rich Roman Philistines, and prayed that he might never be reduced to such an extremity. Late in life he became an office holder, a sort of sub-commissioner in Egypt, and wrote an *Apology* for an inconsistency that was only apparent. He refused to plead poverty, and pointed out that in the public service there was no personal degradation such as he had described. He seems to have died in official harness, about 200 A.D.

Rhetoric had made a Greek of Lucian, but her meretricious charms could not hold him, and at the age of forty, about the time when he moved to Athens, he discarded the sophist's profession and flattered himself that he had turned to philosophy. In the *Double Indictment*, written about 165, he shows Rhetoric bringing suit against him for desertion, while Dialogue, far from supporting him, expresses in a parody of Plato's style his own grievance, as one whom Lucian had degraded from his associations with philosophy, linked with Comedy, and forced to play the buffoon. *Yes*, said Lucian, *I refused to discourse subtle nothings about the immortality of the soul . . . or the claims of rhetoric to be*

called a shadow of a fraction of statecraft or a fourth of flattery.[1] He was indeed no philosopher. His conversion by the Platonist Nigrinus in Rome, described in the *Nigrinus*, was too sudden to be lasting, a rare gust of emotionalism. Satire was his true vocation, and his literary life in Athens was devoted mainly to satiric dialogues. Of the eighty-two compositions that pass under his name, several are now unanimously assigned to later imitators, notably the *Halcyon*, a charming dialogue on the myth of the kingfisher,[2] and *Lucius*, or *The Ass*, a fairy tale of the metamorphosis of a man into an ass, and the beast's marvelous adventures till he could eat roses and resume a human shape. Apuleius about the same time wrote a Latin version of the same story, drawn perhaps from the original followed by 'Lucius of Patrae' as the writer of *The Ass* styles himself. But in Apuleius the air of magic that decadents love pervades the whole, while in the pseudo-Lucian there is a slighter interest in the supernatural side. *The Ass* was paraphrased by Machiavelli.[3]

Of the sophistic pieces the *Phalaris* (I and II), the apology of the tyrant of Sicily, and the *Praise of a Fly* are good examples of paradoxical panegyrics, a sort of special pleading for which Lucian's legal experience had been good training. The *Disinherited* is a stock theme of the schools, which we meet in Latin in the *Suasoriae* of the elder Seneca, written long before Lucian. *Swans and Amber* is a clever little introductory speech, the *hors d'oeuvre* customary with the sophists before the epideixis, the declamation proper, began.

Sophistic works

Lucian gave new life to the dialogue. His writings in this form range in date from 160 to 175 A.D., roughly speaking, and are not easily classified. He shows the greatest versatility, using the dialogue for panegyric, as the *Portrait Study* in praise of Panthea, the mistress of Lucius Verus, composed when the emperor visited

[1] *Double Indictment* 34.

[2] Translated by Pater in *Marius the Epicurean.*

[3] Against the Lucianic authorship are Cobet, Dindorf, Jacobitz; for, Arnim, Rohde, and others.

Antioch (162/3); the *Anacharsis*, in which an intelligent Scythian debates with Solon the value of hard exercise, an opening for genial satire on the mania for athletics. The *Hermotimus*, written about 165, is a manifesto of skepticism in which he reviews his pursuit of truth among the schools of philosophy, and declares, on the word of a man of forty, that the quest is hopeless: "I would have kissed the feet of Truth if I could have found my way to her through the crowd of philosophers," says Traill's Lucian to Pascal.[1] But the *Hermotimus* was a farewell to philosophy more sentimental than was warranted by the connection.[2] The influence of New Comedy is evident in the brief mimes, the *Dialogues of Courtesans*. The *Dialogues of the Dead* are more definitely satiric, moralizing conversations between the dead and their guardian gods on the folly of the living. They were plainly written under the influence of a satirist who takes part in more than one of them, Menippus of Gadara, who at the close of the fourth century B.C. had set the type which was to be followed by both Greek and Roman satirists. For the character of the satires of Menippus, which are all lost, we must look to Lucian's lively imitations. The *Dialogues of the Gods* and *Dialogues of the Sea Gods* were the opportunity of Lucian the skeptic. They are his most characteristic pieces and attack the current belief in the gods. Lucian could not tolerate any form of insincerity or credulity, and the world he lived in was composed of men who either pretended to believe in the gods for their own ends, or were blindly superstitious. It was an age when charlatanism throve, and whether in religion or literature Lucian was its unsparing foe.

Dialogues

His *Alexander, the Oracle Monger* is an account of his exposure of the frauds of one of the most successful impostors of the

[1] *The New Lucian*, London, 1900.

[2] Pater, who paraphrases the dialogue in *Marius the Epicurean*, transforms Hermotimus, the worn student of sixty, to an ardent youth who is disillusioned by the arguments of Lucian speaking in his own person and not under the disguise of Lycinus as in the original.

day and the most dangerous, because more gifted than other men of his time. Between Lucian and this man there was a duel to the death, till Alexander's heroics were ended by a painful disease. At the close of his narrative Lucian refers to Epicurus, *that great man whose holiness and divinity of nature were no shams*, one of the few unqualified words of admiration of a philosopher that he was known to utter, and perhaps inspired in this place rather by a sympathy for the atheistic attitude of Epicurus than by any respect for his doctrines. From the Christians Lucian naturally never got any credit for his attacks on Paganism. The *Philopatris* being judged spurious, there is no direct hostility to the Christians to be found in the rest of the Lucianic writings. But he would have rent Christianity with gusto, had he not made the mistake of regarding it merely as one of the least offensive of the new religions that kept arriving from the East. In the *Peregrinus*, the strange story of the Christian turned Cynic who burnt himself alive at Olympia (169 A.D.), he shows small respect for the unaccountable beliefs which Peregrinus had discarded. The *Sale of Creeds*, one of the most amusing of the dialogues, is one of his last thrusts at philosophers and their doctrines. The creeds, represented in most cases by the founders of the schools, are put up for sale by Zeus and Hermes. Pythagoras with his golden thigh is bought by a syndicate; no one can afford to buy the voluptuous Aristippus; while Stoicism, with its monopoly of virtues and talents, is knocked down to a dealer for fifty pounds.

The Alexander

The essay *How to write History* was written about 165, when Verus was conducting the Parthian war. Every educated man, says Lucian, took to writing the history of that war. It was an epidemic, like that curious tragedy fever that once fell on the people of Abdera. Rather than be out of it, Lucian will at least write about writing history. He reminds the historian that history and panegyric are, to quote his favorite measure of distance, two octaves apart. He shows from contemporaries how not to write history — *I wish my bitterest*

How to write History

foe no worse fate than the reading of them. Frigid? Caspian snows, Celtic ice, are warm in comparison.[1] Lucian is at his most amusing as he describes the historian who is more Thucydidean than Thucydides, the unconvincing wounds described by one, the strange deaths of another; the 'seventy thousand of the enemy killed while the Romans lost two'; the queer geography, one writer taking Samosata and putting it down squarely in Mesopotamia; the floods of tragedian's rhetoric.

The whole essay is really a prologue to the *True Story*, a parody of all the wonderful narratives of lying Greek historians from Herodotus and the historians of Alexander, down to those who were writing on the Parthian war.[2] It is a *Gulliver's Travels* written without the bitterness of Swift, a literary not a moral satire. Lucian outdoes all the marvels of this sort of tale, dear to the Greeks since the narrative of Odysseus to Alcinous. He visits the sun and moon, who happen to be at war, lives, like Jonah, in a whale for nearly two years, spends some time in the Islands of the Blest, where Homer confides to him that he is a Babylonian and really wrote all those 'spurious' verses — *so now I knew what to think of the critics Zenodotus and Aristarchus and all their lucubrations*.[3] As he left, Odysseus, unseen of Penelope, handed him a letter for Calypso.

The True Story

The conceits of the hyper-Atticist were not to be let pass by one whose mission was to expose all the folly of the world. The *Lexiphanes* and the *Guide to Rhetoric* are directed at the sophists with whom he no longer was reckoned formally. The *Lexiphanes* ridicules the affectations of the archaists and purists, and their efforts after the peculiar word, while the *Guide* is an ironical set of rules for the budding rhetorician, designed to show that the short cut to the profession may be safely taken in this gullible world.

Lexiphanes

Marcus Aurelius, but for the armor of Stoicism, might have wept like Heracleitus at the spectacle of the vanity of human

[1] 19. The quotations are regularly from Fowler's translation.

[2] Juvenal 10. 174: Quidquid Graecia mendax audet in historia.

[3] 20.

life, but Lucian, like another Democritus, "laughed the world away." His is not an endearing personality. He has none of the engaging softness or the nice feelings of Plutarch and Dio, and when he commands respect, it is for his perfect sincerity, and not for any more positive virtues or dignity of character. His aloofness from the cant and charlatanism of his day he did not make dignified. With Lucian all is hard and bright, nothing dimmed or softened by pathos or sentimentality. But he had a genuine passion for writing well, and that covers many sins. What is hardest to forgive is his glibness, his perfect assurance.

Lucian's Style

His style is the triumph of the imitative method. He was not, of course, impeccable, and he was too closely in touch with his time not to assimilate and reproduce in his Greek much that Aristeides would have been pained to read, since he could not have verified the expressions in any standard work. The writer of the *Lexiphanes* naturally avoided the commonplaces of the sophists, which were too well worn, the eternal reminiscences of Marathon and the Persian wars, the excessive use of antithesis, and the other rhetorical devices. He drew his vocabulary chiefly from Plato, Xenophon, and Attic Comedy. His pages are crowded with images and tags from the poets, and he did not disdain, on occasion, the violent metaphors dear to sophists. When he had hit on a good figure, he used it more than once, a tendency common to most devotees of style. A good deal of his reminiscence Greek is, of course, parody, so that it is hard to say with this writer of many moods when his style is himself.

Romance

The domination of sophistic is plain to see in a literary *genre* which the Greeks developed late and never brought to perfection, — the romance. The Greek novel began with Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, and this sort of biography, half history, half romance, was to the last a favorite type. All followed Xenophon's formula, the biographers of Alexander with their marvelous tales, down to PHILOSTRATUS, the sophist, who, in the third century, wrote for Julia Domna, the literary empress, the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, the wonder worker, whose career

showed so close an analogy with the life of Christ that Philostratus used to be charged with writing a parody of the Gospels. But in embellishing the adventures of the Pythagorean saint, he was but following the fashion of writing didactic romance in the form of biography. The imaginary letters of great men were really essays in fiction, and with Alciphron became a sort of epistolary romance. Lucian, in the *True Story*, was only imitating such a writer as Antonius Diogenes, whose *The Wonders Beyond Thule* was something between fabulous history and romance. We have a summary of it in Photius.

But the true romance, the love story, was sure to predominate in the end. The New Comedy had prepared the way for it, and the sophists included in their declamations erotic speeches, while earlier still the erotic elegy and the idyl set the type. As early as Aristotle there were the *Milesian Tales*, of which we have echoes in the analyses of Parthenius in the first century B.C. They corresponded apparently to the shadier French novel of to-day, in moral tone, and Plutarch tells us that they were found in the luggage of a Roman officer after the defeat of Crassus at Carrhae, and were read aloud to the shocked senate of barbarians, who were told to judge from these tales of the morals of the men who aspired to rule over Parthians.[1] There was much local romance, *Ephesian Tales* and *Babylonian Tales*, of the sort that Callimachus loved to revive, or Musaeus used for his *Hero and Leander;* but these legends counted almost as history, and the same may be said for a papyrus dated about 50 A.D., on which was found, in 1893, a fragment of the story of the loves of Ninus and Semiramis. About the close of the fourth century A.D., HELIODORUS of Phoenicia wrote his *Tales of Ethiopia*, a fantastic romance of a type that must have been popular in his time, a mere series of adventures in strange lands, differing little from the wonder narratives parodied by Lucian, except that here the main interest is the love of an Ethiopian princess for a Thessalian Greek. ACHILLES TATIUS, of Alexandria, wrote in the fourth or fifth cen-

[1] *Crassus* 32.

tury his *Story of Leucippe and Cleitophon*, the one of Byzantium, the other of Tyre. He took as his model the work of Heliodorus. This, too, is a tale of wildly improbable adventures, ending with the happy marriage of a pair of lovers. The style is often highly epideictic, and Achilles Tatius inserts a prose poem on the rose, one of the favorite commonplaces of sophistic rhetoric.

Longus

With LONGUS Greek fiction touched its highest point. He was a sophist, probably of Lesbos, who lived between the second and fifth centuries. His *Daphnis and Chloe* is a pastoral romance of Mitylene, and shows the direct influence of Theocritus. No Greek novel is complete without pirates and the supernatural, and both are in *Daphnis and Chloe*. But the pastoral effect remains as the deepest impression, and redeems the grossness of certain scenes. This mark of decadence was avoided by the author of *Paul et Virginie*, when he imitated Longus.[1] The mark of the sophist is over all these writers. They insert speeches in the declamatory style, set arguments, dithyrambic laments, change their styles according to the rules of sophistic, but prefer, on the whole, the Asianic manner, especially for emotional scenes.

Eunapius

As Philostratus makes the second-century sophists stand out for us with a prominence perhaps unfairly due to his sketches, so EUNAPIUS of Sardis wrote the *Lives* of the philosophers and sophists of the fourth century, chiefly the representatives of the Neo-Platonic school to which he belonged. Though his work is far less valuable and entertaining than that of Philostratus, we rely on him for much of our knowledge of this later group of sophists to whom is due a second, but less brilliant, renaissance of rhetoric.

The central interest of the lives of these men, who were all phil-Hellenes and pagans, was the attempt of the Emperor Julian, himself not the least among the sophists, to revive pagan worship throughout his empire. Athens was the training ground of fourth-

[1] Reich, *De Alciphronis Longique aetate*, Königsberg, 1894, places Longus in the latter half of the third century A.D., and is followed by Norden.

century sophistic, though Antioch, Nicomedia, Byzantium, and Alexandria were all eager to maintain the most distinguished sophists. Himerius of Prusa, born 315 A.D., was conspicuous as a professor at Athens, in favor alike with Christian emperors and Julian the Hellenist. We have thirty-four of his speeches, chiefly on the stock themes of the schools, and a number of occasional addresses. He has all the marks of an Asianist, calls himself a swan, a cicada, a swallow, and his speeches, 'hymns,' 'odes,' or 'songs,' in the sophistic jargon. In fact, it was only the fashion that kept him from writing verse.

The fourth-century sophists

Themistius of Paphlagonia was something more than a sophist, and had great influence at the court of Byzantium, where he taught rhetoric to the sons of emperors, and was a sort of court orator at imperial functions. We have thirty-five of his *Orations*, and his *Paraphrases* of Aristotle, rare evidence of serious scholarship in one of these sophists. Themistius tried to make up the old quarrel between sophists and philosophers. Technically he was a sophist, gave displays of epideictic rhetoric, and never quoted his *Paraphrases* to prove himself a philosopher. The Neo-Platonists, who represented philosophy in the fourth century, would have none of him, and by his attitude to the sophists he estranged both sides. His style was based on the Attic orators, but he warns his hearers not to look to him for the perfect accuracy of a purist, an accuracy to which, indeed, no purist had ever attained.

Themistius

His friend Libanius, of Antioch, took Aristeides for his model, and declared that he would give the wealth of Midas to achieve anything like the perfections of that new Demosthenes. He was rigidly conventional, and his panegyrics are cut out precisely after the pattern prescribed by the theorists. He had the talent for epideixis that Aristeides had lacked. We have sixty-five *Orations*, all of the sophistic type, and 1607 *Letters*, several addressed to the Emperor Julian, whom he outlived and dared to mourn. He was content with the title of sophist, unlike Themistius, and thought it the most flattering that he could

Libanius

bestow on Julian.[1] He was among the most punctilious of the sophists in his avoidance of Roman names, and, as far as possible, of Roman allusions. This was a piece of etiquette that Aristeides had scrupulously observed, though it must often have been embarrassing to men who hung on the favor of Roman emperors. Themistius the independent ignored this tradition, but Himerius often uses a circumlocution rather than write a Roman name. Philostratus tells how Apollonius of Tyana came across the word "Lucullus" in a document addressed to him by some Ionians, and returned their letter with a reprimand for barbarism. Libanius manages to compose a panegyric of Julian without naming a single Roman emperor, avoiding even Marcus Aurelius, who was Julian's model. Nor does he ever use a Latin word or expression.

Julian

Julian the Apostate counts with the sophists, who adored him as the restorer of Hellenism, and was taught secretly by Libanius, in spite of the prohibition of the Christian Constantius. He had some instruction from Themistius also, though the latter stood aloof from the Julianic revival. Julian's work as a sophist is technically comprised in his panegyrics and prose *Hymns*, but the trail of the sophist is on all that he wrote. His oration *On Monarchy*, in honor of Constantius, observes all the rules laid down by Menander for this species of composition, in which every sophist must be an expert. We have nearly a hundred *Letters*, many of which are spurious. Julian wished to make Neo-Platonism the philosophy of his revived Hellenism, but he belonged to the younger or Syrian branch of the school of which Iamblichus was the real founder, and only once mentions Plotinus. Iamblichus the theurgist, on the other hand, he ranked with Plato, and paid him a fanatical devotion. Julian's vague ideal had been the restoration of the old gods of Greece, but when he had fairly faced their numbers and given them back their special altars and sacrifices, the Platonist revolted in his blood. The monotheism that philosophy had been teaching for centuries must remain the religion of the educated, but he was

[1] *Letter* 43.

all the more sensitive as to the attitude of the people to his restored gods. His two prose *Hymns*, *To the Sun* and *To the Mother of the Gods*, have the form and the commonplaces of this sophistic type. He often makes the stock excuse of haste and lack of professional ease in writing, and all his work shows by its clumsy repetitions and digressions a want of finish. In narrative and satire his style is clear and straightforward, but much of his philosophical writing is darkened by the obscurity inevitable when a theory is only vaguely realized. His is the reminiscence Greek of the period, full of echoes, interwoven with half verses, phrases, and whole sentences taken without acknowledgment from the Greek masterpieces. All the sophists were strongly influenced in their diction by Plato, and Julian is no exception. Two of his compositions stand apart from the rest, the *Caesars*, a satire in the form of a banquet of his predecessors, in which Constantine plays the villain and Marcus Aurelius has all the honors, and the *Misopogon*, written as a satire on himself when the ungrateful people of Antioch had ridiculed his beard and aspect of a philosopher.

In Julian's scheme philosophy must always be in the service of religion. In this he showed himself essentially a man of the fourth Christian century, unable to revive in himself or others the true spirit of Hellenism. To return to the standpoint of Plato was indeed impossible for one who, to promote Hellenism, must outbid the rival attractions of Christianity. Neo-Platonism, compared with the other schools of philosophy, had been, from the first, religious, but we may see from a brief retrospect how far it had degenerated in the course of a century.

Plotinus

Plotinus of Lycopolis, in Egypt (204–270 A.D.), was the real founder of the school. For a time he had been the pupil of Ammonius Saccas at Alexandria, but later he came to Rome, where he spent the last twenty-six years of his life in teaching. It was during his last sixteen years that he wrote the *Enneads* (*Nines*), so-called because each of the six sections contained nine discussions, fifty-four books in all. This work is the written monument of Neo-Platonism. Plotinus revised

nothing, and left to his pupil Porphyry the arrangement of the work, and even the correction of the spelling, which was a weak point in his acquired Greek. In the *Enneads* he debated and expounded, one by one, questions of ethics, psychology, metaphysics, cosmology, and aesthetics, as they arose in his school. In spite of Porphyry's editing, they appear in no regular sequence. The rhetorical questions with which he begins almost every paragraph partly reflect his debates with his pupils, partly heighten the effect of energetic exposition. To the charms of style he was indifferent, but a fervent sincerity redeems the frequent obscurities of manner, and at times the accents of enthusiasm take the tone of genuine eloquence: *We must mount again to the Good which every soul craves. He that has seen it knows what I say, how fair it is. For as Good it is to be desired, and men desire it. He that would attain it must climb up and keep his face toward it, and strip off the garments that he put on in his downward course to earth. So, having left behind, on that ascent, all that is alien to the God, with pure self he beholds pure deity, simple, without stain, on whom all things depend, toward whom all things look, in whom they are, and live, and think. What then is the way? What the method? How shall a man behold the ineffable beauty that abides in the innermost shrine of the holy temple, nor ever emerges to meet the eye of the profane? Courage! Let him press on to the holy place within. But first he must leave behind the sight of his eyes, nor once turn to gaze on the loveliness of earth that before seemed so fair. For he that looks on earthly beauty must not pursue it in haste, but remember that it is but an image, a trace, a shadow, and so flee to that of which it is a copy.*[1] This doctrine of the need of escape upward for the individual soul was no doubt inspired by Plato's description in the *Republic* of the ascent of the true philosopher to the region of the Ideas, and so to the apprehension of the Good. But for Plato the Good, though the highest of all, was not separated from the rest of the Ideas. For Plotinus, however, the One, "the fountain light of all our day,"

[1] *Ennead* I. 6. 7–8.

"Unplaced, unparted, one close Unity
Yet omnipresent; all things, yet but One;
Not streaked with gaudy multiplicity,
Pure light without discolouration," [1]

was above and beyond the Platonic Ideas to a degree that he was always struggling to express with a vocabulary framed to deal with the things of sense, and not for the convenience of idealist philosophers. The second member of his Trinity was Mind, which creates Being by thinking, and is itself the thinker and the thought. Mind contains the Ideas or archetypes of the whole visible world. The third member is the Soul of the Whole, produced by Mind. Soul contains a plurality of souls and, with them, spirit turns toward matter, since they choose the worse, the prison of the body. This error they must expiate by dissatisfaction with life, and the desire for reascent, for

"The way, which from this dead and dark abode
Leads up to God." [2]

The Plotinian discipline prepares the soul for a detachment on which is to dawn the vision of the Absolute, *the flight of the Alone to the Alone*.[3] Such a vision Plotinus himself achieved four times in the five years of his association with Porphyry. To him everything human must necessarily be alien. Asceticism has never been pushed farther, though it is usually more somber, more self-tormenting, more implacable. His mysticism was of the severest, most abstract type, but his counsels of perfection met the needs of many in that age of soulless rhetoric, and in the fourth century the *Enneads* were more widely read than Plato.

The speculative mysticism of Plotinus seems to leave little open-

[1] Henry More, *Psychathanasia*. More was one of those Cambridge Platonists who tried to reconcile the Christian doctrine that God is Love with the Plotinian conception of a principle above all being, impersonal, un-selfconscious. In him is to be found the most direct poetic expression of the teachings of Plotinus.

[2] Vaughan, *The World*.

[3] *Ennead* 6. 9. 11.

ing for the dogmas of mythology. Yet he admitted that the worship of the gods might help others to the attainment of spiritual ecstasy, though for himself the union with the Absolute must be achieved by heavenly contemplation. Moreover, he accepted the theory of daemons, and accounted for evil in the world by their agency. That way lay the road to superstition and imposture, which his followers took in due course.

Literature, at that time, gained nothing from this spiritual renaissance. It was reserved for men of the mold of Henry More, Drummond, Vaughan, Spenser, Milton, and Wordsworth to give these doctrines literary life. The earlier, at least, of these turned to the metaphysical aftergrowth of Platonism in the *Enneads* of Plotinus even more than to the dialogues of Plato, because the Trinity they found there attracted them by its likeness to Christian doctrine.

The decadence of Neo-Platonism made little headway in the writings of PORPHYRY of Tyre (233–301? A.D.), the Syrian youth of noble descent, who forsook all to be the disciple of Plotinus, wrote his *Life* and published the *Enneads*. **Porphyry** He was the savant among the Neo-Platonists, grammarian, historian of philosophy, mathematician, and Aristotelian commentator. But his chief interest was the exposition of the Plotinian philosophy. In his *Letter to Anebo* he recognizes with amazing candor the drawbacks and frauds of polytheism as it was practiced in his day. But he explained them by the working of wicked daemons, and went farther than Plotinus in recommending magic and theurgy as a means of counteracting the powers of evil.

Porphyry's pupil, IAMBLICHUS of Chalcis (died 330 A.D.), was the theologian of the school, as Plotinus had been its metaphysician. Like all the Neo-Platonists, he was eclectic, and would have called himself a philosopher of all the schools. But his eclecticism was superficial and arbitrary. When a Platonic or Aristotelian doctrine could be distorted, or a phrase borrowed, to help out his fantastic theories, he claimed the authority of Plato and Aristotle. But the final appeal for him and **Iamblichus**

his followers was not to human wisdom but to divine revelation. He stands for the decadence of Neo-Platonism, and though we may decline to believe all the miraculous stories of his life, as Eunapius tells it, there is no doubt that theurgy was the means he chose for attaining mystical union with the One. The treatise *On the Mysteries*, which was long ascribed to him, has been rejected by Zeller on account of its style. But we have evidence enough that, though he was more refined in his methods than Lucian's Alexander, he was an impostor, or at best a fanatic. His disciples Chrysanthius and Maximus, who had a strong influence over Julian, were professed miracle workers, priests rather than philosophers. For the teachings of Iamblichus Julian[1] had a fanatical admiration, ranked him above Plato and Plotinus, and, following him, insisted that initiation into the Mysteries is essential for the philosopher. Ascesis, with the aim of a vision of the Absolute, was still preached in Julian's writings, but his practice carried him far from the severe spirituality of Plotinus. His preoccupation with Neo-Platonism explains why he turned for sympathy, in his revival of Hellenism, not to the Roman aristocracy and Senate, the real strongholds of fourth-century paganism, but to the sophists and theurgists of Athens and the east. Not long after the failure of his attempt we find Neo-Platonism established at last in the Academy at Athens, and, in a scholastic reaction, resuming the study of Plato and Aristotle. Athens remained the headquarters of its teaching until, in the time of the last scholarch Damascius, Justinian closed the school (529 A.D.).

Proclus

The last great Neo-Platonist, PROCLUS (410–485 A.D.), was born in Constantinople, of parents who had emigrated from Lycia. At Athens he became the pupil of Syrianus, and succeeded him as scholarch. His *Life* was written by his disciple, Marinus. In his attempt to systematize philosophy, Proclus divided everything into threes. Even the daemons must

[1] The six *Letters* addressed to Iamblichus which are included among the Julianic writings are, of course, spurious. Iamblichus died about the time when Julian was born.

be of three kinds. By his lifeless classifications he relegated Neo-Platonism to the sphere of scholasticism. But for him, too, positive religion came first; theurgy was a striking feature of his ascetic discipline, and he regretted that he could not limit the reading of his contemporaries to the *Timaeus* of Plato and the utterances of the oracles. His reverence for Plato was genuine, and his commentaries on the *Timaeus*, the *Republic*, the *Parmenides*, and the *Cratylus* witness to his industry. The *Chrestomathy* which has come down under his name is known to us only from analyses in the *Bibliotheca* of Photius the Byzantine lexicographer, and from fragments preserved in the *Codex Venetus* of the *Iliad*. It is a sort of primer of Greek literature, put together in a perfectly uncritical spirit, and its remains are valuable to us mainly for their information about the Trojan part of the epic cycle.[1]

Such collections as this played to some extent the part of histories of literature, except that they were designed as well to give direct instruction in philosophy and morals by means of the quoted utterances of all who could be pressed into service. It is to this fact that we owe the greater part of so much of the literature of Greece as has survived only in quotations. It would be ungracious, in considering this debt, not to mention JOANNES STOBAEUS, of Stobi in Macedonia, whose date falls not earlier than the sixth Christian century, and possibly later.[2] His work, originally in four books, has come down to us, after some abridgment, under two titles, the *Eclogues*, devoted mainly to physics and ethics, and the *Anthology* (*Florilegium* or *Sermones*), extracts in prose and verse on all imaginable conditions and relations of human life. Fragments of the three great dramatists, and of many minor poets, epic and dramatic; the elegists, in whom he found a mine of sententious reflections; the poets of Comedy, whom he ransacked as diligently as Athenaeus,

Stobaeus

[1] See p. 46. It is still, however, an open question whether we are justified in identifying the author of the *Chrestomathy* with Proclus the Neo-Platonist.

[2] The latest writer quoted by Stobaeus is Hierocles of Alexandria, the Neo-Platonist (*floruit* 450 A.D.).

two centuries before him; the philosophers; the Alexandrian writers; from all these and many more he gathered the flowers of wisdom and beauty that were to educate his son Septimius, unaware that the task would make his homely name immortal.

With Julian and his contemporaries Greek prose literature may be said to end, and it is only by a stretch of courtesy that one includes the sterile rhetoric of the later sophists, those sapless leaves frozen on the tree of knowledge, in the category of literature at all. Poetry, as has been seen, was not yet wholly extinct, since Nonnus and Musaeus, and here and there an epigrammatist, were to relieve the barrenness of the next two centuries. But prose had long been dead, and the remains of the rhetoricians would seem unworthy of notice, if it were not that the historian of Greek literature must always omit with a qualm the most trivial piece of evidence since he may thus unconsciously distort more than is inevitable the proportions of the original whole.

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Leipzig, 1906. Bethe, *Quaestiones Diodoreae*, Göttingen, 1887. Bader, *De D. rerum Rom. auct.*, Leipzig, 1890. Kaelker in *Leip. Studien* 3. JOSEPHUS: The best manuscripts for the *History* are the *Parisinus*, 14th cent., and *Bodleianus*, 15th cent.; for the *War of the Jews*, *Parisinus* and *Ambrosianus*, both 10th cent. Editions: Havercamp, Amsterdam, 1726. Dindorf, Paris, new ed., 1868. Bekker-Naber, Leipzig, 1896. Niese, Berlin, 1887–1896. Druner, *Forschungen über J.*, Marburg, 1896. Translation: Whiston-Margoliouth, London, 1906. STRABO: The best manuscripts are now at Paris. *Ed. princ.*, Aldus, Venice, 1516. Casaubon, Paris, 1620. (Strabo is usually cited according to Casaubon's paging.) Müller and Dübner, Paris, 1858. Karolies, Athens, 1889. Meineke, *Vindiciae Strab.*, Berlin, 1852. Dubois, *Examen de la Géographie de S.*, Paris, 1891. Wilkens, *De S. fontt.*, Marburg, 1886. Ruge, *Quaestt. Strab.*, Leipzig, 1888.

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II. Editions. Stephanus, Paris, 1572. Reiske, Leipzig, 1774–1782. Doehner-Dübner, Paris, 1846–1855. *Lives: Ed. princ.*, Florence, 1517. Sintenis, Liepzig, 1852–1855, 1873–1875. Bekker, Leipzig, 1855–1857. Selections: The *Lives:* Siefert-Blass, Leipzig, 1872. *Moralia*: Aldus, Venice, 1509. Wyttenbach, Leipzig, 1796–1799. Bernardakis, Leipzig, 1884–1896 (7 vols. and appendix). Paton, *Pythici Dialogi tres*, Berlin, 1893. Parthey, *Isis u. Osiris*, Berlin, 1850.

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The New Sophistic

(Second Century)

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CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE[1]

All dates for Greek events earlier than the middle of the seventh century B.C. are legendary or conjectural.

B.C.	
776	Traditional date of the First Olympiad.
680 ?	CALLINUS of Ephesus, elegiac poet.
676 ?	TERPANDER of Lesbos, musician and melic poet.
650	ARCHILOCHUS of Paros, iambic, elegiac, and melic poet.
	ALCMAN of Sparta, choral melic poet.
648	Eclipse of the sun mentioned by Archilochus (see p. 85).
630	MIMNERMUS of Colophon, elegiac poet.
625	SEMONIDES of Amorgos, iambic poet.
	ARION of Lesbos, choral melic poet.
600	ALCAEUS of Lesbos, melic poet.
	SAPPHO of Lesbos, melic poet.
	STESICHORUS of Himera, choral melic poet.
599	SOLON of Athens, elegiac poet, 639–599.
590	THALES of Miletus, philosopher.
570	ANAXIMANDER of Miletus, philosopher.
550	ANAXIMENES of Miletus, philosopher.
	CADMUS of Miletus, logographer.
	PHERECYDES of Syros, philosopher.
546	CYRUS takes Sardis. Fall of Croesus.
540	PHOCYLIDES of Miletus, elegiac poet.
	DEMODOCUS of Leros, elegiac poet.
	ANACREON of Teos, melic poet.
	HIPPONAX of Ephesus, choliambic satirist.
	IBYCUS of Rhegium, melic poet.
	XENOPHANES of Colophon, philosopher and elegiac poet.

[1] The date given is the *floruit*, placed approximately at forty years of age, to which are added, when known, the dates of birth and death. Authors whose century is unknown are omitted.

534 First tragic contest at the City Dionysia, in Athens.
THESPIS of Attica, tragic poet.
530 PYTHAGORAS of Samos, philosopher.
520 THEOGNIS of Megara, elegiac poet.
LASUS of Hermione, choral melic poet.
CORINNA of Boeotia, choral melic poet.
516 SIMONIDES of Ceos, choral melic poet, 556–468.
510 Democracy established at Athens.
508 The Attic State assumes control of the tragic choruses.
500 HERACLEITUS of Ephesus, philosopher.
HECATAEUS of Miletus, logographer.
CHOERILUS of Athens, tragic poet.
PRATINAS of the Peloponnesus, tragic poet.
494 Fall of Miletus.
PHRYNICHUS of Athens, tragic poet.
490 Battle of Marathon.
PANYASIS of Halicarnassus, epic poet.
485 AESCHYLUS of Athens, tragic poet, 525–456.
480 EPICHARMUS of Cos, comic poet.
PINDAR of Thebes, choral melic poet.
Battle of Salamis.
479 Battle of Plataea.
475 PARMENIDES of Elea, philosopher and poet.
468 BACCHYLIDES of Ceos, choral melic poet.
460 CHIONIDES of Athens, comic poet.
MAGNES of Athens, comic poet.
ANAXAGORAS of Clazomenae, philosopher.
456 SOPHOCLES of Athens, tragic poet, 496–405.
450 PHRYNIS of Lesbos, musician.
GORGIAS of Leontini, sophist and rhetorician.
CRATES of Athens, comic poet.
ZENO of Elea, philosopher.
EMPEDOCLES of Agrigentum, poet and philosopher.
444 HERODOTUS of Halicarnassus, historian.
PROTAGORAS of Abdera, sophist and grammarian.
CRATINUS of Athens, comic poet.
440 ANTIPHON of Athens, orator.
EURIPIDES of Athens, tragic poet.
MELISSUS of Samos, philosopher.

440 SOPHRON of Syracuse, writer of mimes.
435 LEUCIPPUS of Abdera ?, philosopher.
431 Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War.
PERICLES of Athens, statesman and orator.
430 HIPPIAS of Elis, sophist.
HELLANICUS of Lesbos, historian.
PHERECRATES of Athens, comic poet.
THUCYDIDES of Athens, historian.
HIPPOCRATES of Cos, writer on medicine.
429 SOCRATES of Athens, philosopher, 469–399.
425 THRASYMACHUS of Chalcedon, sophist and rhetorician.
420 DEMOCRITUS of Abdera, philosopher.
PRODICUS of Ceos, sophist.
415 The Sicilian Expedition.
AGATHON of Athens, tragic poet.
EUPOLIS of Athens, comic poet.
CRITIAS of Athens, poet and statesman.
ARISTOPHANES of Athens, comic poet.
412 THEODORUS of Byzantium, rhetorician.
411 Revolution of the Four Hundred.
406 Death of Euripides.
405 PLATO of Athens, comic poet.
404 ANTIMACHUS of Colophon, epic poet.
403 End of the Peloponnesian War.
400 TIMOTHEUS of Miletus, citharoede.
ANDOCIDES of Athens, orator.
LYSIAS of Athens, rhetorician and speechwright.
399 Death of Socrates.
EUCLEIDES of Megara, philosopher.
395 ISOCRATES of Athens, rhetorician and publicist.
394 XENOPHON of Athens, historian.
387 PLATO of Athens, philosopher, 427–347.
380 ANTISTHENES of Athens, philosopher.
ISAEUS of Chalcis, speechwright.
ARISTIPPUS of Cyrene, philosopher.
368 ANTIPHANES of Asia Minor ?, comic poet.
362 DIOGENES of Sinope, philosopher.
354 ALEXIS of Thurii, comic poet.
350 EPHORUS of Cyme, historian.

350 THEOPOMPUS of Chios, historian.
LYCURGUS of Athens, orator.
349 AESCHINES of Athens, orator.
HYPEREIDES of Athens, orator.
344 ARISTOTLE of Stageira, philosopher, 384–322.
343 DEMOSTHENES of Athens, orator, 383–322.
338 Battle of Chaeronea.
337 DIPHILUS of Sinope, comic poet.
332 THEOPHRASTUS of Lesbos, philosopher.
331 Foundation of Alexandria.
323 Death of Alexander.
320 PHILEMON of Soli, comic poet.
DEINARCHUS of Corinth, speechwright.
305 TIMAEUS of Tauromenium, historian.
302 EPICURUS of Samos, philosopher.
MENANDER of Athens, comic poet.
300 DEMETRIUS of Phalerum, orator.
ZENO of Citium, philosopher.
DOURIS of Samos, historian.
291 CLEANTHES of Assos, philosopher.
290 HEGESIAS of Magnesia, rhetorician.
PHILETAS of Cos, elegiac poet.
ASCLEPIADES of Samos, melic poet and epigrammatist.
280 ? ISYLLUS of Epidaurus, choral melic poet.
LYCOPHRON of Chalcis, epic and tragic poet.
276 LEONIDAS of Tarentum, epigrammatist.
275 THEOCRITUS of Syracuse, bucolic poet.
270 CALLIMACHUS of Cyrene, Alexandrian epic and elegiac poet.
260 ARATUS of Soli, writer of didactic epic.
HERODAS of Cos, writer of mimes.
236 ERATOSTHENES of Cyrene, librarian and encyclopaedist.
234 EUPHORION of Chalcis, epic poet.
222 RHIANUS of Crete, epic poet.
180 ? NICANDER of Colophon, epic poet.
180 CRATES of Mallus, Homeric critic.
ARISTARCHUS of Samothrace, critic and grammarian.
170 POLYBIUS of Megalopolis, historian.
150 MOSCHUS of Syracuse, bucolic poet.
BION of Smyrna, bucolic poet.

150 MELEAGER of Gadara, epigrammatist and anthologist.
55 PHILODEMUS of Gadara, Epicurean and epigrammatist.
40 DIODORUS of Sicily, historian.
20 STRABO of Amasia, historian and geographer.
8 DIONYSIUS of Halicarnassus, historian and critic.

A.D.
50 CRINAGORAS of Mitylene, epigrammatist.
77 JOSEPHUS of Jerusalem, historian.
80 DIO CHRYSOSTOMUS of Prusa, sophist and lecturer.
90 PLUTARCH of Chaeronea, moralist and biographer.
100 EPICTETUS of Phrygia, philosopher.
130 APPIAN of Alexandria, historian.
ARRIAN of Nicomedia, historian.
140 HERODES ATTICUS of Athens, sophist.
150 PAUSANIAS of Lydia ?, topographer.
161 MARCUS AURELIUS, emperor and philosopher.
165 LUCIAN of Samosata, sophist and satirist.
169 ARISTEIDES of Mysia, sophist.
180 OPPIAN of Cilicia, writer of didactic epic.
180 ? ALCIPHRON, epistolographer and sophist.
180 CASSIUS DIO of Nicaea, historian.
210 PHILOSTRATUS of Athens, sophist and biographer.
220 AELIAN of Praeneste, sophist.[1]
225 ? ATHENAEUS of Naucratis, grammarian and writer on minor antiquities.
225 ? BABRIUS, writer of fables in choliambics.
244 PLOTINUS of Lycopolis, Neo-Platonist philosopher.
250 ? DIOGENES LAERTIUS, biographer.
330 Seat of Empire removed to Byzantium.
350 THEMISTIUS of Paphlagonia, sophist and Aristotelian commentator.
354 LIBANIUS of Antioch, sophist and epistolographer.
355 HIMERIUS of Prusa, sophist.

[1] Aelian was an Italian who never so much as visited Greece, though he preferred to write in Greek his anecdotes of the philosophers, of animals, and of the persons, important and insignificant, whom he gathered into his *Medley of History* (*Varia Historia*). This has survived, together with the treatise *On Animals* and a number of *Letters* of dubious authenticity. It is only by convention that one includes their author's name among those who have contributed to Greek literature.

371 JULIAN of Constantinople, emperor and sophist.
380 ? QUINTUS of Smyrna, epic poet.
386 EUNAPIUS of Sardis, sophist and biographer.
390 ? HELIODORUS of Phoenicia, writer of romance.
400 ? NONNUS, epic poet.
450 PROCLUS of Lycia, philosopher.
500 ? MUSAEUS, epic poet.
529 Closing of the schools of philosophy by Justinian.
540 AGATHIAS, epigrammatist.
PAULUS SILENTIARIUS, epigrammatist.
550 ? STOBAEUS JOANNES of Stobi in Macedonia, anthologist and collector of extracts.

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